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THE EXTENT OF SALVATION:

A TREATISE

SHOWING THE COMPATIBILITY OF A

STATE OF PUNISHMENT BEYOND THE GRAVE

WITH

UNIVERSAL SALVATION.

BY

homas
T. G. RUTHERFORD.



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PREFACE.

THE design of this volume is to show forth the consistency of scripture truth. Although it will be found to conflict with the various systems of theology generally received in our day, yet it is hoped, that this fact will not influence the judgment of the Church for or against its merits, until they have been carefully and prayerfully considered. One of the deadliest shafts of infidelity against the inspiration of the volume of Divine truth, is wielded under the assumption, that it contradicts itself—and against Christianity *in general*; that its advocates are so divided in sentiment and belief, even on those doctrines which are considered as essential to vital religion. Although the inspiration of the sacred scriptures has been fully attested by noble champions in the Church of Christ; yet it cannot be denied, that infidelity has had, for reasons above intimated, the power, not only of weakening the Church within, but also of greatly retarding the missionary of the cross in his efforts to tell of a Saviour's love to a world lying in wickedness. If what is set forth in this volume is a true exposition of the word of God, it will be found that doctrines, apparently conflicting, when rightly viewed, perfectly harmonise.—It will take from the hand of infidelity that weapon which has done more evil in these latter times, than all other instrumentalities of Satan. It will have a tendency to promote such an alliance among the saints of the Most High, as will be truly formidable against every thing that opposeth and exalteth itself, in opposition to Truth.

The aspect of nations, declares that the time has arrived for the Church to *arise and shine*—to set up a *standard*, around which every Christian heart might beat in unison and love; and thus to be

instrumental in making this barren world to bloom and blossom as the rose.

The author, in giving publicity to views which so much rejoice his own heart, is actuated by no other feeling than that of sincere desire for Zion's prosperity, and to discharge what he conscientiously believes to be his duty.

TO THE

CHURCH OF CHRIST.

Mercy unto you, and peace and love be multiplied.

As the chief design of the Christian dispensation was to hasten the work of redemption, it is exceedingly important that mankind should hear and understand what it pleased our heavenly Father to do, for the attainment of that desirable end. There are millions on the earth, who have never heard of the glad tidings of salvation through a crucified Saviour, and are bowing in ignorance to stocks and stones—little indeed elevated above the level of the brute. And there are millions who submit their best interests into the hands of blind guides, who adulterate and fundamentally overturn the very foundation of the blessed plan of salvation. While on the other hand the Church itself, tossed hither and thither on the tempestuous ocean of sectarian strife, has need of increased light and wisdom. Instead of there being *unity* and *love* among the saints of the Most High, the din of strife and contention is heard in the camp. In the place where the steady light of divine truth should shine forth to enlighten the dark abodes of wretchedness and woe, it is difficult to distinguish between the light and the darkness. The chilliness of death is felt where vital warmth

should proclaim life and health. So long accustomed to the murky atmosphere of denominational territories and to the confused Babel-like noise of denominational conflicts, Christians are almost content to remain thus blinded to their own best interests, and to the welfare of the world. Instead of ardently desiring to be liberated from the chains which fetter it to earth, the Church, in general, torn and rent to the centre, is saying "I am rich and increased in goods, and have need of nothing." Rev. iii. 14—22. Although its various members are in open conflict contending one with another, yet they will not take knowledge of these symptoms of decay and death—they will not learn, that they are making the house of God, the scene of *wretchedness, misery, poverty, blindness, and nakedness*. They would rather have the fruits of sectarianism, than "gold tried in the fire;" and their eyes dimmed with prejudice, than have them anointed with "eye salve" that they might see. This state of the Church is known to Him with whom we have to do: from Heaven, his dwelling place, he seeth that it is "neither cold nor hot." His bowels are even now turned against its present and unholy condition. God forbid, that such a state of affairs should continue any longer.

Let any unprejudiced mind inquire into the *cause* of the contention among Christians, and he will be convinced that they have not arrived at the *whole truth*—he will be convinced that divine truth is but feebly reflected from that branch of the Church, which he may think to be in the most healthy condition.

If a knowledge of the truth is desirable for, and important to, the welfare of the Church and the world; it becomes the duty of those who realise the want of this fundamental element of success, to pray for, and hold

their minds in readiness to receive a larger measure of it, from the hands of Him who alone can impart true wisdom. Once let the mind of man break from the shackles of *sectarianism*, as it did in the sixteenth century from the embrace of the *Man of Sin*, and the shout of universal freedom shall soon ring throughout the world. It is sectarianism that chains the Church to the earth, and keeps it from soaring in the higher and more healthy atmosphere of perfect liberty and truth. Let those who delight to display their powers in the field of controversy remember, that in the days of our Saviour there were Scribes and Pharisees *learned* in all the subtleties of the law, who, nevertheless, as our Saviour calls them, were “blind guides,” and who were superseded by the “fishermen” of Galilee. Let them remember, that the boasted *wisdom* of the Papal Church was instrumental in driving from the mind of the world, almost every appearance of truth. Such facts should teach man to be humble—to take heed, lest instead of becoming the instrument of doing good, he becomes the author of confusion. The Lord humbleth the high-minded, and exalteth them that are lowly in their own eyes. “Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings, thou hast ordained strength.” Ps. viii. 2.

The author of these pages freely acknowledges that he has but little of that kind of learning, which in our day is so much relied upon, if not considered as essential to the understanding and explaining the scriptures. His time has rather been given to the understanding of the scriptures themselves, than to the fruitless endeavour of ascertaining what particular construction such and such a learned man has put upon them. While he respects the observations and deductions of good men, he has been taught by *their differences* not to place too much confi-

dence in their particular views. All mankind are fallible. Scripture is the only true interpreter of scripture : and as it is given to all, it becomes the duty of all who have it in their hands, humbly to search and understand it for themselves, as “every one shall give account of *himself* to God.” Rom. xiv. 12. We need not fear the scrutiny to which liberty of conscience and thought will subject the scriptures ; for they declare nothing but *the truth*. And as man has the faculty of perceiving the truth, it follows that, if carefully sought, the truth will be discerned : and as error cannot stand before truth, so we may know, that when truth has been attained, so long as the mind is left unfettered, it will stand unmoved, though all the powers of fallen man should conspire its overthrow. As the “Dragon” by degrees curtailed liberty of conscience, truth in proportion had to fly for shelter into the “wilderness” Rev. xii. 13, 14, of the dark ages. And as soon as this right of man was contended for, and obtained at the Reformation, the whole power of the “Beast” was made to quake to its very centre—it even threw the “woman” sitting on “the scarlet-coloured beast” on her bed of languishing. And although liberty of conscience since the Reformation has been interfered with, by the strong hand of sectarianism, yet, as soon as the Church again asserts her right, we may expect to see the now recruiting power of Antichrist come “to his end, and none shall help him.” Dan. xi. 45. *Error* must fall, and that by the hand of *truth*.

Actuated by a strong desire to see the Church arise and put on her beautiful garments—to behold the blessed light of divine truth penetrate earth’s remotest boundaries, the author would gladly contribute his mite to the accomplishment of so glorious an end ; and if in the least

degree he should be instrumental in furthering an object so much to be desired, the praise will be entirely His, who has given the ability to sinful man to perform his pleasure. He does not pretend to bring any thing *new* to your consideration, but merely to revive truths which have long been concealed from the eyes of the Church—truths which are clearly revealed in sacred scripture, and which are so important, that the proper understanding of them, made the hearts of the primitive Christians burn bright with holy joy—truths, which actuated them to labour with much zeal for the extension of the kingdom of our Lord and Saviour;—truths, that the adversaries of the Gospel could neither gainsay nor resist—which made polytheistic nations bow with humble reverence and awe at the feet of the holy Jesus—truths, which, until darkened by the cunning craftiness of the *Man of Sin*, were fast proclaiming liberty to a world devoted to the delusive pleasures of sin. Though long concealed, these precious truths are destined to shine as bright and pure as ever.—They are destined to chase from the borders of Zion, the malaria of sectarianism and bigotry, and to unite all who truly love the Lord Jesus Christ, in the holy and pure bands of unadulterated Christian fellowship.

Since the Reformation, the Christian Church has attained unto much truth, both glorious and precious, by the perusal of the sacred pages of inspiration: truth sufficient, if heeded, to save the whole world. Nearly the whole revealed plan of salvation has been rescued from the tyrannous hand of despotism; but, as yet, its parts are separated—sacred truths are only seen in a disconnected manner. Different denominations of Christians, with sleepless vigilance, have watched the blessed volume of inspiration:—They have held it up to the view of the

world ; yet still there is much reason to regret, that the natural waywardness of the human heart, has kept distant from each other these different portions of the army of the Lord of Hosts. Instead of meeting on the common platform of LOVE, and there before God depositing that which had been entrusted to their keeping, and with united prayer and supplication seeking the guidance of infinite wisdom to adjust the apparently conflicting truths of revelation, they have stood aloof from each other, as though they were sheep of different folds—as though each had a different Shepherd. By the vain endeavour to erect separate systems of Gospel truths upon isolated facts, they have thrown mystery around the whole scheme of redemption. But when we look at the human mind, we need not be surprised at such a result. Different individuals, in the investigation of the same subject, are prone to diverge in various channels. And there are minds which, when convinced of the truth of one part of a subject, so concentrate their powers to its individual inspection, that they expose themselves to be prejudiced against other portions of the system equally as worthy of respect and belief. It matters not how perfect *a whole* may be, if the parts are not cautiously and properly arranged, confusion is sure to follow. Several individuals, in the investigation of the same subject, may arrive at several incontrovertible truths ; and it is possible, that each one being satisfied with the soundness of his own, may doubt the truth of one or all of those conclusions arrived at by the others : consequently, each one will be prone to establish a particular theory of his own, in which every description of material will be used to prop up the fundamental idea. As a matter of course, while several theories arise, the harmony and consequent benefit of the

whole, is rendered almost, if not quite useless. A piece of machinery constructed for the accomplishment of a certain purpose is useless, however accurately made, unless put together; and if not properly adjusted, it may have a tendency contrary to that for which it was constructed. So with the sacred scriptures. The Creator, as in every instance of his handy work, brought forth the plan of salvation in all the grandeur of perfection, and by the apostles of our Saviour showed the world the connection of the several parts thereof; yet man, by the natural perversity and blindness of his character, so interfered with its harmonious movement, that the beautiful and glorious scheme was laid almost a hopeless wreck through many successive generations. At the dawn of the Reformation, the precious scheme began to emerge from obscurity; and although the whole had been embedded in the mire of superstition, yet the beautiful parts began to be appreciated as they were severally brought to the light of day.

When we take into consideration the *novelty* of scripture truth at that time, there is no cause for wonder, that none were found, who could both understand and arrange the several parts of the plan of salvation so as present it in its pristine grandeur to the astonished eye of the world. But as the various doctrines of the scriptures, taken separately, are so distinctly set forth, it was but reasonable to suppose, that different minds would *perceive* and *retain* them. And thus it was. The several parts of the wondrous scheme were carried forth from *Babylon the Great* with the shouts of joyous victory. Truths were plucked from the iron fetters of despotism, never again to be immured in the noisome cells of ignorance. Light began to dawn on the bewildered Church of Christ.

When “the dry bones” heard “the word of the Lord,” there was a great “shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone.” Since then, “the sinews and the flesh came up upon them,” and they have been covered with “skin.” Ezek. xxxvii. 1—8. Although clouds and darkness have since partially enveloped the full glare of divine truth, yet ere long, we may reasonably expect it to emerge from behind the vapoury mantle which has so long intervened, and to shine forth in all the perfection of noon-day splendour; scattering from the horizon every appearance of the mist which has so long caused the *chilliness of death* to characterise the Church; and which consequently retarded the chariot wheels of the Gospel as it went forth to tell of a Saviour’s love to a dying world.

The different parts of the plan of salvation have been so entirely disjointed, that in several systems of theology, fundamental truths have been greatly changed, by the attempt with discordant materials to produce symmetry of form; and, as might be expected, much harm has resulted from the unnatural construction. Forced attempts to reconcile apparent contradictions, have nearly counteracted the beneficial tendency of such theories as have been most perfectly adjusted. Too close attention to any of these prevailing systems, have generally been attended with danger to personal religion; which would have been entirely the reverse, if the whole plan of salvation could have been seen moving in harmonious action, according to the intention of the Almighty Architect.

The plan of salvation is one symmetrical and perfect system—in it there is no contradiction. It requires no material of man’s forging to keep it together. The glorious and Almighty Architect—the framer of the universe,

devised and perfected the scheme ; and man has only to use the powers entrusted to him, with diligence and zeal ;—to disrobe himself of fancied wisdom, and stand with humble reverence and awe before the footstool of mercy, to learn and understand the whole council of God.

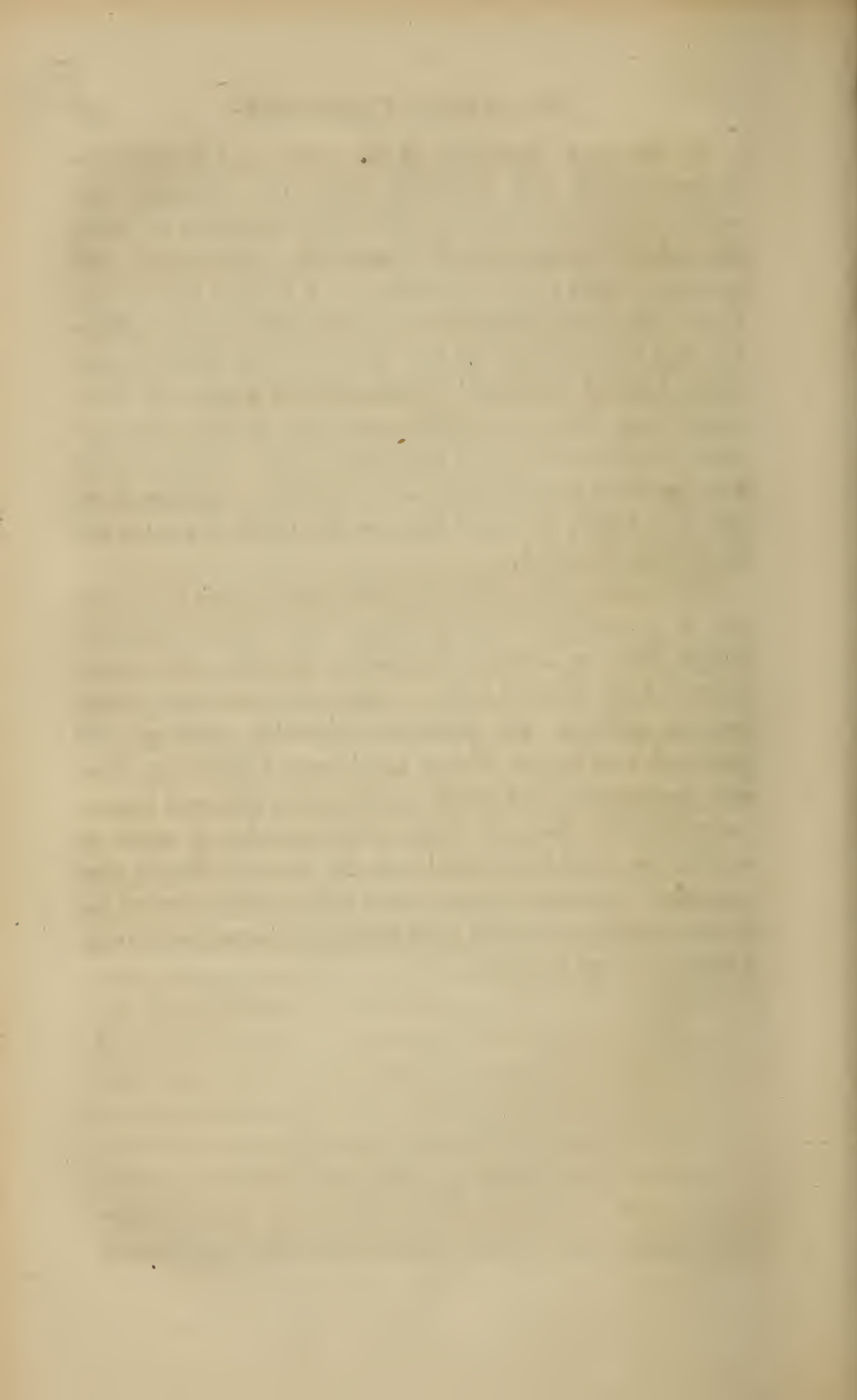
The author is well aware of the opposition which will intuitively arise in the minds of many against the views which are about to be set forth. They will be found to conflict with certain theories and opinions which, in a great measure, are regarded by different denominations of Christians as *essentials* to the consistency of their theological creeds. Although such is the case, impelled by a sense of duty, he cannot refrain from presenting what he conscientiously believes to be the truth, in opposition to those things which do but “gender strife” among the saints of the Most High, and which, in various ways, greatly impede the progress of Christ’s eternal kingdom. But, especially is he aware of the determined opposition which is likely to arise in the case of those who have spent long years in grounding themselves in those opinions, which are now, to all human appearance, so indelibly written upon their minds. He would utterly despair of performing this his bounden duty, did he not know that with God all things are possible. Acting under His commission, and relying upon His sufficiency, he is encouraged to hope that *truth* will prevail, and dispel the lingering gloom which still dims the eye of faith, and bespeaks the condemnation of the *Man of Sin*. Christians—*true Christians* desire to know nothing but the truth : but, although this is the case, it is not to be denied that they are of like passions with other men, and exposed to the various extraneous circumstances which tend to subvert good desires and intentions. That Chris-

tian has learned little of the heavenly teaching, who is not continually making large draughts upon *charity* for his frail brethren around him, who exceedingly err both in faith and practice. The *mind*, like the heart, has gone out of the way; and as the heart cannot be made clean in the sight of God, without much humility and child-like docility of character; neither can the mind be made to stand upright before God, to observe and understand the truth, unless it is made to feel its nothingness, that it may be wise. That wherein we so much boast, may be the stumbling-block of all progress; therefore it becomes us not to be high-minded, but fear—not to be too confident in our acquirements, but ever to be jealous of ourselves, lest we continue perversely in error.

On the other hand, much caution is necessary, lest we entertain ideas that will not stand the test of candid investigation. Indeed, at all times, it requires a well-balanced mind to receive and retain truth, as well as to disrobe ourselves of error; and especially so in this our day. The surest safeguard against the encroachments of error, is an humble reliance upon the Most High, to guide and direct us into all truth. He that has promised to be with his Church, and to hear the prayer of faith, is not slow to perform; therefore, humbly depending upon him, we need not fear. We may listen, and it becomes our duty to listen to what is spoken in the *name of the Lord*: but we are not bound to receive any thing but that which is consistent with God's holy word, and can be proved thereby. As candidates for eternity, it becomes us seriously and prayerfully to reflect upon what we hear, and to be exceedingly particular as to what we *reject*, as well as to that which we *receive*. An error, on either hand, might prove fatal to others, and to ourselves.

At the very threshold of the great and momentous subject which will presently claim our attention, the author, well remembering the hasty character of man, shrinks at the thought of advancing. Few indeed will patiently listen to the discussion of a subject which conflicts with their past opinions. The earth may be globular, but if man believes not the fact, how hard to convince him of his error! The power of steam and electricity may almost annihilate space, but to have declared these wonders in an age ignorant of such powers, would have excited but ribaldry and contempt. Although we live in a highly favoured age, yet the mind of man is not altogether changed.

And again, the author is made fearful, lest he should fail in presenting his arguments with that perspicuity which their importance demands. But he will endeavour to look beyond self, to Him who alone can qualify man to perform his pleasure:—humbly praying that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ may bless our meditation, and guide us into all truth, and that he may lead his *elect* to reject every species of error to which the mind is exposed and the heart inclined: and may that day soon dawn, when with perfect UNITY the Church shall convey the glad tidings of salvation to every creature under heaven.



ETERNAL PUNISHMENT BEYOND THE GRAVE

COMPATIBLE WITH

UNIVERSAL SALVATION.

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*As the sacred scriptures most unequivocally teach, that they who reject the offers of salvation in this life, shall hereafter, (that is, after death,) be consigned to an eternal punishment: so they also teach that the salvation wrought out by Jesus Christ was intended for, and will ultimately be made available to every descendant of Adam.*

It will be our endeavour to prove that these apparently contradictory doctrines are in perfect consistency with the scheme of redemption devised by infinite wisdom.

In these pages it is taken for granted, that they who die impenitent will hereafter be punished. How any professing to believe in the sacred scriptures can reject a doctrine so clearly revealed therein as this, is a matter of the most profound astonishment. If it is not therein taught, we are left entirely at a loss to account for the *cause* of that whole system of means which is expressly designed to woo man *to flee from the wrath to come*. The supposition, that man by nature has the sentence of death abiding in him, is so interwoven throughout the whole fabric of scripture truth, that an attempt to extract it renders nugatory the whole design of the *glad tidings*. The word of God represents man as dead in trespasses and sins, and holds up to his view the only way to escape from merited punishment. If, as in truth it is, there is

no other hope held out to ruined man to escape from the condemnation of the law, how is it possible for those to pass from death unto life, who will not avail themselves of the proffered gift;—who refuse to comply with the prescribed conditions of salvation. If our Saviour bids us come unto him, that we *may have life*, he surely does not teach that we may have it without obeying his instructions. When we are told that God can be “just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus,” Rom. iii. 26, by no course of reasoning can we therefrom infer that he can be just, and yet justify those who *will not believe* in Jesus.

But, without further delay, we invite your candid attention to the subject proposed for consideration: trusting that the truth as it is in Jesus may be the object of all concerned in the investigation; and we humbly pray that “the spirit of truth” may guide us “into all truth.”

We will *first* call your attention to the *scripture use* of the words, αἰών and αἰώνιος, translated in the common English version, “world,” “for ever,” “eternal,” and “everlasting:” and having shown their signification, we will afterwards proceed to prove that the salvation wrought out by Jesus Christ was intended for, and will ultimately be made available to every son and daughter of Adam.

Primarily, it is important that we inquire, whether αἰών, or the adjective αἰώνιος, do or do not allude to an illimitable state of existence. If it can be proved that they do, as a matter of course, any attempt to reconcile universal salvation with eternal punishment beyond the grave, would be the height of folly. But, on the other hand, if it can be proved that they do not allude to an illimitable period of existence, then we are not left guilt-

less, if we reject a doctrine so distinctly taught, without any attempt to ask ourselves whether it is, or is not a doctrine of the sacred scriptures. If the signification of these words do not in the least conflict with the doctrine just mentioned, we see not how the conclusion of its truth can be avoided, forasmuch as it immediately clears up difficulties, which have been the cause of so much contention in the Church of Christ; and at the same time reveals to us the *just* and *merciful* God, infinitely more glorious than we had been accustomed to conceive.

That αἰών, or αἰώνιος, invariably allude to an illimitable state of existence, no Greek scholar will pretend to assert. If there can be no controversy here, then, from this quarter, all objections against the compatibility of universal salvation with eternal punishment are precluded.

These words, αἰών and αἰώνιος, are used in the sacred scriptures, as well as in the ancient Greek authors, to represent *time*; *a space of time*; *life-time*, *life*; *a long period of time*: *of long duration*; *eternal*, *lasting*; *permanent*.\*

We will now present to your consideration various instances, which we think will give you a clear conception of their use in general, throughout the New Testament.

Our Saviour says, Matt. xiii. 22, "He also that received seed among the thorns, is he that heareth the word, and the care of *this world*," (τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου,) that is, the care of *this age*, or of *this life*, which is in contradistinction to *the age*, or *life to come*. This care, "and the deceitfulness of riches, choke the word," &c.

Paul says to Timothy, "Charge them that are rich *in*

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\* Donnegan's Lex.

*this world*, [ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι, that is, *in the present age or life*,] that they be not high-minded," &c., 1 Tim. vi. 17. And to Titus he writes, "teaching us, that denying ungodliness, . . . we should live soberly, righteously, and godly *in this present world*," (ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι,) i. e. *in the present age or life*. And when writing to Philemon, in behalf of Onesimus, he says, "For perhaps he therefore departed for a season, that thou shouldst receive him *for ever*." Philemon 15. (αἰώνιον,) that is, he departed for a very short time, that thou shouldst receive him *permanently*, i. e. *for life*.

With regard to the primitive sense of the words under consideration, in the above examples, there can be no doubt: but there are other passages where they have a more extended signification, as the following: "But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall *never* thirst." John iv. 14. (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) "If any man eat of this bread, he shall live *for ever*." John vi. 51. (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα) "The oath which was since the law maketh the Son, who is consecrated *for ever*." Heb. vii. 28. (εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα,) that is, who is consecrated a priest *permanently*, and not like those who were made priests under the law. Will there not be a time when Christ shall lay aside his character as priest?

From these few instances, it is evident that these words, αἰὼν and αἰώνιος, are as properly used to describe a *short* period of time, as one of longer duration.

When we speak of time as divided into the past and future, we generally use some word, which, with equal propriety expresses the *former*, as well as the *latter period*; although the former may be of definite, and the latter period of indefinite extent. In contrasting the present and the future by the use of the same word, we always

bear in mind the distinction between one and the other period ; for instance, we say, *the present life*, and *the life to come*—*the present age*, and *the eternal ages*—*the present existence*, and *future existence*. Here, *life*, *age*, and *existence*, describe two distinct periods of duration. Precisely in the same manner, are the words *αιων* and *αιωνιος* used in the original Greek ; and not, as some English scholars might have supposed, only to designate the future : for example, our Saviour says, Luke xx. 35, “The children of *this world* [*τοῦ αἰῶνος τούτου*, that is, of *this age*, or *life*,] marry, and are given in marriage, but they which shall be accounted worthy to obtain *that world* [*τοῦ αἰῶνος ἐξείνου*,] neither marry, nor are given in marriage.” And again, “whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in *this world*, [*ἐν τῷ νῦν αἰῶνι* i. e. neither in *the present life*, or *age*,] neither in the world to come.” Matt. xii. 32. In this latter clause, *αιων* is understood. Paul says of Christ, that he has been raised by the Father “far above all principality, power, . . . and every name that is named, not only in *this world* [*ἐν τῷ αἰῶνι τούτῳ* *age*, or *life*,] but also in that which is to come.” Eph. i. 21. Thus, we perceive, that the Saviour and the Apostle Paul, used the word *αιων* to express a state of existence either present or future,—of longer or shorter duration, synonymously as we use the words *life* or *age*.

Again ; we will suppose a period of a thousand years, subdivided into ten or fifteen parts. In English, we would say, it was a period composed of a specified number of periods—an age, composed of various ages. In the same manner the words under consideration are used in the original language.

In the first place, we will recite instances in which *past*

*time* is regarded as one distinct and entire period; for example, "As he spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which have been since the *world began*." Luke i. 70. (ἀπ' αἰῶνος,) literally, which have been from *eternity*, that is, as he spoke by all the prophets which had prophesied *from the beginning, to the time then present*. Again; "Since the *world began* [ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνος] was it not heard that any man opened the eyes of one that was born blind." John ix. 32. See also Acts iii. 21.

Having seen that *past time* is represented as one distinct and entire period, we will now show, that this period is divided into an indefinite number of periods, ages, or eternities: thus, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, Paul says, that "grace" was given him "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which, *from the beginning of the world* [ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων\*] hath been hid in God," &c. Eph. iii. 9. Literally, which hath been hid in God *from the eternities*, or ages: *i. e.* from the beginning of the ages, or eternities, which had intervened *from the fall, to the time then present*. Thus also, writing to the Collossians, he says "the mystery which hath been hid *from ages*, [ἀπὸ τῶν αἰώνων] . . . is now made manifest to his saints." Col. i. 26. The translation here expresses the full sense of the original.

On the other hand, *the future* is often spoken of as *one distinct and entire period*. Our Saviour says, "If any man shall eat of this bread, he shall live *for ever*." John vi. 51. (ἐἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.) "He that doeth the will of God abideth *for ever*." 1 John ii. 7. (ἐἰς τὸν αἰῶνα.) These examples, express that such persons have passed from death unto life, and, consequently, are not subject to spiritual death. This period again is subdivided into lesser periods: thus,

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\* αἰώνων is the gen. plural of αἰών.

“For of him, and through him, and to him are all things: to whom be glory *for ever*.” Rom. xi. 36. (ἐἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας,\*) literally, to whom be glory *for the ages*, or eternities, that is, to whom be glory throughout all those ages, or periods, comprehended in the future. So also, the following examples: “Christ who is over all, blessed *for ever*.” Rom. ix. 5. (ἐἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας,)—unto the ages, or eternities. “To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ *for ever*.” Rom. xvi. 27. (ἐἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας,) unto the ages, or eternities. “Who served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed *for ever*.” Rom. i. 25. (ἐἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας,) unto the ages, or eternities. In these instances, while the English version conveys *the truth*, it fails to convey the *whole truth*, as it is in the original.

Thus we have seen, that both the past and the future are sometimes spoken of as entire and distinct periods; and also, that these periods are subdivided into minor periods. Presently we will perceive, that the past and future, as embracing in them the *whole extent of duration*, from the commencement to the completion of the plan of salvation, is subdivided into various periods. Paul says, “But we speak the wisdom, . . . which God ordained *before the world*.” 1 Cor. ii. 7. (πρὸ τῶν αἰώνων)—*before the ages*, or *eternities*; that is, Paul spoke forth the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the time or *times* were instituted, in which it was His pleasure that man should be redeemed. Αἰώνων, embraces all time, from the institution to the completion of the plan of salvation. Again: “According to his own purpose . . . given unto us in Christ, *before the world began*.” 2 Tim. i. 9. (πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνιων)—*before eternal ages*, or *times*. “Which God, that cannot lie, promised *before the world*

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\* αἰῶνας is the acc. plural of αἰών.

began." Titus i. 2. (πρὸ χρόνων αἰώνων)—*before eternal ages*, or times. If there was a period *before* the ages or eternities commenced; why may there not be in the future, a period *when they shall end*?

"God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made *the worlds*." Heb. i. 1, 2. (τοὺς αἰῶνας,)—by whom he made *the ages*, or *eternities*; i. e. the different periods comprehended in the whole time allotted for the entire restoration of the human family.

In Paul's Epistles to the Ephesians, we find these words: "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ." Eph. iii. 11. (κατὰ πρόθεσιν τῶν αἰώνων ἣν ἐποίησεν ἐν Χριστῷ,) literally, according to the purpose *of the ages* which he made in Christ.

Paul writing to Timothy, addresses Christ as *the King of ages*, or eternities, (τῷ δὲ βασιλεῖ τῶν αἰώνων.) 1 Tim. i. 17.

The angel informed Mary, that Jesus should "*reign over the house of Jacob for ever*." Luke i. 33. (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας,) unto the eternities.

As there was a period when the ages, or eternities, had not commenced; so we are taught to expect, that there will be a period when they will have been completed, and *THE KINGDOM of Christ delivered up to the Father*. 1 Cor. xv. 24.

Thus we have distinctly seen *that time*, during which the work of redemption was to be completed, divided into the past and future: and these periods, in turn subdivided into lesser periods. And again, we have perceived that *whole period* divided into minor periods,

without respect to the past and future: while in the first part of the investigation, we found the words translated in the common English version “*for ever*,” “*eternal*,” &c., to express with equal propriety, either a long, or a short period of time.

In no other manner than that just adopted, is it possible for us to have any fixed ideas of the meaning of these words, αἰὼν and αἰώνιος. And from the examples presented to your consideration, we can have no authority whatever to infer positively, that they ever allude to an illimitable state of existence. The proof of man’s immortality must be derived from other sources.

By paying particular attention to the foregoing, we may never be at a loss to understand the precise meaning of the words which we have been considering. For instance, “Now all these things happened them for our ensamples, . . . upon whom *the ends of the world* are come.” 1 Cor. x. 11. (τὰ τέλη τῶν αἰώνων)—*the ends of the eternities* are come. Τῶν αἰώνων (the eternities) embrace the whole period of time in which the work of redemption was to be completed. And as a great portion of that time, or those ages, had already passed, when this sentence was uttered, the propriety of the apostle’s expression is therefore easily perceived:—“the ends of the eternities.” The apostolic age was included in the latter part of that time, or system of times, during which, man was to be redeemed from the curse of the law. With much greater emphasis the expression may be used in our day and generation. See also Heb. ix. 26.

The phrase, “for ever and ever,” (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων,) *unto the eternities of the eternities*, or unto the ages of ages, is susceptible of the same solution; for instance, Paul said of the Son of God, “who is over

all, God blessed for ever." Rom. ix. 5. (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας,) —*unto the eternities*. Now, had he added τῶν αἰώνων, the expression would have been the same thing. 'Εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, (unto the eternities,) is *the future*, or that which remains of τῶν αἰώνων, (the eternities) into which *the whole period from the fall, to the completion of the work of redemption*, is divided.

Paul says, "Now unto the King of the eternities, [τῶν αἰώνων,] . . . be honour and glory, *unto the eternities* OF THE ETERNITIES." 1 Tim. i. 17. (εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας τῶν αἰώνων,) that is, *for those ages* which yet remain of the ages.

Peter, when exhorting Christians to make their "calling and election sure," says, "For so an entrance shall be administered unto you abundantly into the eternal kingdom [τὴν αἰώνιον βασιλείαν] of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." 2 Pet. i. 11. Now, we have no doubt that this "eternal kingdom" alludes to the *mediatorial kingdom* of Christ, which Paul teaches, "*shall be delivered up to the Father, when all shall be subdued unto him.*" 1 Cor. xv. 24.

The language of the angel to Mary, although it appears conflicting, is yet entirely consistent with the foregoing: "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob FOR EVER, [εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, *unto the eternities*;] *and of his kingdom there shall be no end.*" Luke i. 33. In this verse, two distinct facts are stated: first, that "he shall reign over the house of Israel for ever;" second, "of his kingdom there shall be no end."

To the understanding of this passage, it is necessary, first, to bear in mind that Christ, as *Mediator*, has a kingdom which shall ultimately be delivered up to the Father; and, second, that Christ as God, is *unchangeable* and *immortal*, and consequently, in this, his *essential*

*character, his kingdom shall have "no end."* Thus, while on the one hand, we learn that the Mediatorial reign of Christ shall end, on the other we are assured of the *perpetuity of the life to come*.

Our Saviour says, "Whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, [*αἰῶν*, or *eternity*,] neither in that which is to come." Matt. xii. 32.

If any are inclined to suppose the expression, "neither in that which is to come," alludes to the existence beyond the bounds of mortal life, then this passage to such can only prove, that they alone who commit the unpardonable sin, *CANNOT possibly be forgiven*; while *inferentially* they are taught, that they who do not commit this sin, *MAY receive forgiveness* both in this, as well as in the *eternity to come*.

But, according to a common opinion and phrase of the Jews, we learn that by *this age* or *eternity*, and *the age to come*, we are to understand the *dispensation of the law*, and *the dispensation of the Messiah*. This is what the Saviour here had reference to, and it affords a consistent interpretation of the passage before us. Those who commit this unpardonable sin, could have forgiveness neither under the *old* or *new dispensation*; but were "in danger of eternal damnation," Matt. iii. 29. This passage teaches us nothing further.

Our Saviour says of the torments of hell, "where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." Mark ix. 46. At first sight, this appears to conflict with the argument we have advanced; yet the difficulty vanishes, as soon as tested by *scripture* and *reason*. In the parallel passage, the same torments are called "*the ETERNAL fire*," Matt. xviii. 8, (*τὸ πῦρ τὸ αἰώνιον*.) From what has

already been said of the signification of the word "*eternal*," we have learned positively, (to say the least,) that it is sometimes used to describe a *limited period of duration*. Now, for the sake of argument, if it is granted that such may be its meaning in the passage before us, the expression, "*where the worm dieth not, &c.*" does by no means conflict with such a supposition: for it is strictly true, that "*the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*," in that future state of punishment, whether it be a period of *fifty* or a period of a *thousand* years.

A sentence of condemnation involves the transgressor to suffer *only*, during that period which was fixed by the character of his crime: after *that time* has expired, he is as free in the eye of the law, as his innocent neighbour, *although he had been sentenced to CONTINUAL solitary confinement*, and to CONTINUAL hard labour for a certain specified time. No one supposes that the word "*continual*" has any relation to the period of time *beyond that* comprehended in the sentence. Thus, in the text, "*where the worm dieth not, &c.*" has respect only to the *actual duration of the punishment*.

If "*the eternal fire*," as mentioned in Matthew, be a limited period of duration, it will be true that "*the fire*" will *continually* torment the condemned: or, in other words, it will be as *a worm that never dies*, and as *fire unquenchable during that time*, but not beyond it; otherwise the punishment will not be of limited duration.

Our Saviour's remark concerning Judas, "*Good were it for that man, if he had never been born.*" Mark xiv. 21. "*If he had not been born.*" Matt. xxvi. 24. This being a *proverbial expression* of frequent use among the Jews, can offer little or no advantage to the support of any particular view or theory: for proverbial expressions are

not always to be taken literally. The sense is often exceedingly hyperbolic.

Even if we take the expression literally, it by no means proves that it would have been better for Judas *never to have had an existence*; but it can only prove, that it had been better for him not to have had an existence *up to, or at that time*. The *future* is by no means included in the expression, “if he had not been born.” The original Greek does not say “if he had never” (or ‘had not’) been born,” but merely, “*if that man WAS NOT BORN,*” (οὐκ ἐγεννήθη.)

The next and last passage that we will notice at the present time upon this particular subject, is found in Luke xvi. 19—31. Concerning the interesting circumstances in the account of *the rich man* and *Lazarus*, every reader of the sacred scriptures is familiar.

In the elucidation of this passage, respect must be paid, first, to the *context*; second, to the general mode adopted by our Saviour when speaking to the Jews. He generally addressed them in *parables*; *that seeing, they might not see*, and hearing, they might not understand.

Our Saviour had been showing his disciples *the impossibility of the affections being simultaneously set upon God and mammon*. ver. 13. And the Pharisees, “who were covetous,” hearing him broach this uncompromising, but indisputable, doctrine, “derided him.” ver. 14. And from this *circumstance* Jesus immediately turns and addresses them. He tells them, although they justified themselves before men, yet God knew their hearts—that they were deceivers, and being deceived; and that what *they highly esteemed*, was an abomination in His sight.

In the sixteenth verse, he intimates the change about to take place:—that a remarkable epoch in the world’s

history was being established. "Since that time, [*i. e.* the time of John,] the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." Then, in the seventeenth verse, he shows the stability of that law which they, by their evil practices, had so fundamentally subverted: "*it is easier* for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." And then, to present their case in the most striking light, he adds, "Whosoever putteth away his wife and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery." ver. 18. The object of this verse is twofold: first, it is a direct condemnation of the course which the Jews had taken: and second, it shows the impossibility of a legal union being effected between the Mosaical and Christian dispensations.

The Jews, as it were, had committed adultery:—they had divorced themselves from their legitimate wife,—the exalted privileges which had been conferred upon them, and had married themselves to the *form of godliness*. While they superstitiously observed *vain traditions*, they omitted the weightier matters of the law.

On the other hand, as the Jewish Church was a shadowing forth of that which was to come:—as Christ, to whom all the types and shadows pointed, had come for the express purpose of abrogating *the hand-writing of ordinances*, and thus to open up a new and living way to eternal life; so, as soon as this was accomplished;—as soon as the mission of the Son of Man had been brought to a close, *the bonds* which united the Jews to their boasted law, was authoritatively dissolved or annulled. The law of ordinances became as a woman put away from her husband; with whom it was unlawful for any to marry, without incurring the guilt of adultery. *Therefore*, the

impossibility of a lawful union between the *old* and *new* dispensations.

Having advanced thus far in his argument, our Saviour, with the eye of Omniscience, scanning both the present condition and future history of the Jews through revolving generations, *sums up the whole* in one of the most interesting and thrilling narratives ever presented to the mind of man.

The scope of *the parable of the rich man and the beggar*, is to show forth the reception of the Gentile world into the privileges of the Christian Church, and the miserable condition which they (the Jews) brought upon themselves. The whole is founded upon the fictitious characters of *Dives* and *Lazarus*; which respectively represent the Jew and the Gentile world. The conversation between Dives and Abraham, is merely intended as a mean to bring out those *facts* which our Saviour intended thus obscurely to express: therefore, in this, as well as in the general interpretation of parabolic representations, every circumstance is not to be too closely pressed.

“There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day.” ver. 19.

This verse appropriately represents the Jews, who were rich in privileges; but like most of those who feel themselves rich, were proud and arrogant.

“And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores.” ver. 20.

This verse is remarkably descriptive of the then Gentile world, which in *spiritual things* were entirely dependent upon the Jews. Instead of receiving the sympathy of those whom God had so signally favoured, they were

rather regarded with the most sovereign contempt. Their deplorable condition could not be hid from the eyes of the Jews ; for on all sides they were surrounded by them.

“ And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man’s table.” Their helpless and ruined condition is here well set forth, as appealing for sympathy to their more favoured neighbours. “ Moreover, the dogs came and licked his sores.” ver. 21. Our Saviour here intimates, that the brute creation, guided alone by instinct, would have taught the Jews their duty, if they had at all been disposed to learn. But they had *wholly gone out of the way ; they had altogether become abominable.*

“ And it came to pass, that the beggar died and was carried by the angels into Abraham’s bosom : the rich man also died, and was buried ; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom.” verses 22, 23.

Here the picture is reversed. The great change which was to befall both the Jew and Gentile world, is most significantly represented by calling in the imagery of death, and by lifting up the veil of futurity. The *one* is made happy, the *other* miserable. What a perfect outline did our Saviour set before their minds, of the actual change which was shortly afterwards to take place. The poor, perishing, and despised Gentile world was welcomed, although, not children according to the flesh, into all the rights and privileges which pertained to the children of Abraham, while the children of the kingdom were cast out, and are still labouring under the righteous vengeance of the Most High.

We are told, that the beggar “ *died ;*” but we are not informed that he was *buried* : but the rich man also “ *died*, and was *buried.*” How completely have they been bu-

ried, in the grave of their own digging, through eighteen centuries?

“And in hell [ᾠδῆν, we will presently speak of the meaning of this word,] he lifted up his eyes, being in torments,” . . . . Here the Saviour represents the unhappy Jews as feeling the consequences of their disobedience, and as seeing “*afar off*,” i. e. through the distant future, the felicity of the Gentile world.

“And he cried and said.” This is not to be taken literally; but, as we before said, this conversation was designed as a mean to bring out those facts which it was the purpose of the Saviour *parabolically* to express.

“Father Abraham, have mercy upon me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame.” ver. 24.

This is designed to reveal the intensity of their sufferings;—the hopelessness of their situation, which they were instrumental in bringing upon themselves;—to show the utter impossibility of their receiving any assistance from the Christian Church while they were thus “buried” in their superstition and folly.

“But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime received thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented.” ver. 25.

To their cry they receive no encouragement. Although they were Abraham’s legitimate offspring, according to the flesh, yet he could do nothing for them: he reminds them of the *past*—they had abused their privileges, and they had to suffer the consequences. And on the other hand, he holds forth the *despised* and *neglected* Gentile world as enjoying all those rights and privileges which

they also might in common with them have enjoyed, if they had performed their duty.

“And besides all this,” he adds, “between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot, neither can they pass to us that would come from thence.” ver. 26.

That “gulf” is of their own making. In spite of all that has happened, they still will cling to their old fond prejudices and peculiarities. Although they have crucified him of whom the prophets did write; yet, withal, they will not repent—they will not have Jesus to be their Saviour.

Though Christians commiserate their condition, and might be willing to render them assistance, yet it is utterly impossible *to approach* them, in the name of the *Lamb of God that taketh away the sins of the world*: and in no other way can it be possible for this “gulf” to be passed. Neither can *they* “come from thence,” while they are unwilling to give up their delusive hopes, and refuse to submit themselves to that *King* whom they once *despised* and *crucified*.

“Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou would send him to my father’s house: for I have five brethren, that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. Abraham saith unto him, they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them.” verses 27—29.

Here they are represented as pleading for their posterity, lest they also should continue in blindness, and suffer the consequence of their folly.

This part of the parable is designed to bring out the real condition, in which the sins of the fathers have placed children through succeeding generations. The only an-

swer they received from their father Abraham is, "they have Moses and the prophets, let them hear them." The Jews have always had the Old Testament scriptures in their hands, but they have, and still do, shut their eyes and stop their ears, lest they should become sensible of their guilt. And it is remarkable, that there have been little or no efforts made for their salvation since the days of the apostles. "They have Moses and the prophets, *let them hear them!*"

Within the last few years, indeed, *the Gospel*, in some instances, has been as a *pathway* for a few souls, to cross that awful gulf which has so long separated them from the privileges of the Christian Church; and we may look forward confidently to that day, when all Israel shall turn unto the Lord;—when the "*great gulf*" shall no longer prove a hinderance to those who would pass from the *one place to the other*.

"And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." verses 30, 31.

These verses bring the parable to its very climax: and never was prophecy more strikingly fulfilled than this. It might have been supposed, that they would have repented if *a great miracle* had been performed; but no: "If they will not hear Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." They were so hardened and obdurate, that no effort of power would convince them. Jesus performed many miracles before the Jews; and yet, they asked of him *a miracle!!* Although they had the fullest evidence of HIS RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD, yet withal, they ob-

stinately refused to give heed. They had "Moses and the prophets," who most graphically describe the peculiar characteristics of *the life and death* of their King, as well as portray with the greatest distinctness, their own *likeness*; yet they refused to be persuaded, notwithstanding the plainness of the evidence . . . . So also, with the children!!

Thus, we have seen the perfect connection and appositeness of our Saviour's address to the Jews; and from *this source*, we have another strong proof of the Divinity of him *who spake, as never man spake*. This parable is in perfect keeping with the generality of his addresses to the Jews. While it was impossible to convince them of their helpless condition, the Saviour takes this means to leave a *legacy to future generations, subscribed by the hand of Omniscience*. His curious workmanship may appear disconnected and confused; but when the whole is taken together, perfection is perceived to arise in a most wonderful manner, even from apparently discordant material.

We would here remark, that the descendants of Abraham, according to the flesh, have in this parable, another mighty evidence that He, whom their forefathers ignorantly crucified and slew, was truly the promised Messiah.

And again, as one of their greatest arguments against the New Testament is, that it acknowledges the Old to be from God, and yet repeals the greater part of the laws therein contained, although these laws are often said to be "*laws for ever*," &c., we trust, that they will see the futility of such an objection, from what has been said concerning the ancient signification of the words commonly translated "for ever," "eternal," &c. And we indulge the hope, that the time may soon dawn, when that once highly favoured people will turn to Him, of

whom the prophets did write, and catch the spirit of him, who although a persecutor of Jesus, yet when converted, laboured more abundantly and successfully than all the other disciples of our blessed Lord and Saviour.

With regard to the word ᾗδης, translated "*hell*" in verse 33, in the New Testament, it never denotes *the future state of the condemned*; but rather has relation to the *derangements of the present state of existence*, as caused by sin. In Matt. xi. 23, and Luke x. 15, where our Saviour foretels the degradation of Capernaum, it is used to denote a state of desolation and destruction which should befall the city, in consequence of abusing the exalted privileges extended to them.

"And thou, Capernaum, which are exalted *unto heaven*, shall be brought *down to hell*." (ἔως ᾗδου,) that is, *from an exalted, to a degraded condition—from honour and prosperity, to ignominy and adversity*. And thus it happened, according to our Saviour's words; for Capernaum, as well as Chorazin and Bethsaida, were so completely desolated during the wars between the Jews and Romans, that it is difficult to determine their former location.

"And upon this rock I will build my Church; and the gates of *hell* [ᾗδου] shall not prevail against it." Matt. xvi. 18; that is, all the concentrated powers and tendencies of the present evil world, will not be able to demolish the glorious scheme which I, the Son of Man, am about to establish. This we have seen verified, although the persecuted Church was driven into the barren wilderness of *dark ages*, where all the powers of darkness conspired its overthrow; yet *based upon the CONFESSION*, "*Thou art the CHRIST, THE SON OF THE LIVING GOD*," it ever stood a monument of God's *eternal Mercy* and

*Truth*, and shall so stand, *unshaken and unmoved*, until it emerges into the unspeakable glory of the *Church Triumphant*.

Peter, after quoting a portion of the 16th Psalm, verses 8—11, directly applies it to Christ, “He seeing this before spake of the resurrection of Christ, that his soul was not left *in hell*, [ἐν ᾧδου,] neither his flesh did see corruption.” Acts ii. 31.

Concerning the meaning, here, of ᾧδης, much has been written. While some have thought that it alludes to a *place of punishment beyond the grave*, for various reasons, the most able commentators of the present age reject such a supposition, and regard it as alluding to nothing more than the GRAVE. But it is our belief, that it has relation to *the morally and physically deranged condition of the world in which we live*, as occasioned by sin.

With this sense attached to ᾧδης, this verse teaches *two things*: first, *the Son was not to CONTINUE in the present world*; second, *that he would not see corruption*: which things were fulfilled, although contrary to the expectation of the Jews, who supposed, that when the Messiah would come, he was to remain on earth, and set up his eternal kingdom.

The word is also found in 1 Cor. xv. 55, where it is translated “grave.” “*O grave [ᾧδην] where is thy victory?*” and also in Rev. i. 18; vi. 8; xx. 13, 14. But we deem it unnecessary to extend our remarks on this topic any further at present. From its use in the New Testament, that it does not allude to the *future state of the condemned*, appears perfectly evident. The proper word in the Greek, expressive of *that state*, is γένεσις. When this word is used, the mind is not left in any doubt of its signification. Thus, “whosoever shall say *thou fool*, shall be in

danger of *hell fire*." Matt. v. 22, 29. (τὴν γέενναν τοῦ πυρός.) "Fear him who is able to destroy both soul and body *in hell*." Matt. x. 28. (ἐν γέεννῃ.) See also Matt. xviii. 9; xxiii. 15, 33: Mark ix. 43, 47: Luke xii. 5. In James iii. 6, γέεννα is used hyperbolically.

We trust enough has been said for the present, to prove conclusively that there is nothing in the scripture use of the words which we have just considered, to conflict with the proposition set forth at the head of this treatise, viz: *Eternal punishment beyond the grave, compatible with universal salvation.*

As we advance in the investigation of those passages of scripture which teach us that as *all die in Adam, even so shall all be made alive in Christ*, we hope you will be constrained more and more to esteem the exceeding great and merciful provisions which the glad tidings of salvation hold out to fallen man. No doctrine in the whole scheme of redemption is more prominent, glorious, and worthy to be esteemed by the Church and the world, than that which it becomes our duty here to discuss. Let it once be received by Christians, and the greatest bane of discontent, which, in our opinion, has ever agitated the Church, will have been for ever banished from its sacred precincts, and buried, where all the weapons of the *Man of Sin* will soon be, in oblivion. It may indeed be necessary for the Saviour yet to go through the courts of his spiritual temple with a scourge, but, blessed be the name of the Most High, although "weeping may endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning."

## UNIVERSAL SALVATION.

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HAVING examined the scripture use of the words, *αἰών* and *αἰώνιος*, translated in the common English version “*eternal*” “*for ever*,” &c.; and having found that their signification will not in the least conflict with the proposition set forth at the head of this treatise, viz: *Eternal punishment beyond the grave, compatible with universal salvation*, we will now invite your attention to the subject which was *secondly* proposed for your consideration, and which is as follows:

*The sacred scriptures teach us, that the salvation wrought out by Jesus Christ was intended for, and will ultimately be made available to, every son and daughter of Adam.*

With regard to this doctrine, every one who is not dead to the feeling of compassion, will have to acknowledge that if true, it is *glorious*, and every way worthy of the God of Love.

The author is not in the least inclined to lean upon man’s reason, which has been so perverted by sin, to direct him in the way of life, when God, who *cannot lie*, speaks so distinctly from the blessed page of inspiration. But, perverted as it is, he would not throw aside a gift, for which he cannot be sufficiently thankful. Reason is the weapon which we must often use, if we would stand secure from the encroachments of error. If the believers in the Koran, or the deluded followers of the *Man of Sin*, would once rightly use this talent, there would soon be an entire demolition of the strong barriers which now

keep them in Egyptian darkness. Man should use reason, but not abuse it. He should endeavour to bring it back to that degree of perfection which it possessed when first created. This is what God designs should be accomplished ; and if man would faithfully labour in *unison with the means* which He has ordained, this purpose would speedily be effected.

While not the least reliance should be placed upon the deductions of the human mind, which is so prone to err, when they are diametrically opposed to the teaching of that blessed volume, which is fully proved to be given by the inspiration of God, yet when it is under the influence of, and guided by infallible truth, it cannot but speak, to a greater or lesser extent, the language of *true wisdom*. And as true wisdom is the same universally—and as God is the fountain of wisdom, it follows that, that wisdom which he requires man to practise, is the same in kind, though not in degree, which He himself practises towards his creatures. God requires man to love *mercy* ; and every rational being must acknowledge, that he is infinite in mercy. The mercy of a perfect intelligent creature, is a *miniature* of infinite mercy.

In moral, as well as in natural philosophy, a law once ascertained, is universally the same wherever it is in operation :—the sameness is evident, be the examples large or small. As it is true wisdom in, as well as the duty of, men as members of society, to promote the virtue and happiness of the whole ; so, whenever this wise law is observed, it is an example of the same in kind with that which characterises the conduct of the Deity towards his creatures. The reason why we are bound to practise such a law is, that we are under the government of Him, who being the perfection of wisdom, practises it

himself, and wills us to be wise, as he is wise. A society of men under the guidance of wisdom, although it would be but as a grain of sand, in comparison with the universe over which God rules, would, notwithstanding, be under a law similar to that which characterises his government.

But to advance a step further: if it is true wisdom, as well as the duty of society, to enact laws to punish transgressors, and shut them out from all its privileges for a period of time proportionate to the colour of the offence, then this is an example, the same in kind, with that *law of justice*, which the Creator puts in force in His universal government. But it is also true wisdom, as well as the duty of society, to guide the hand of justice with mercy. That is, it is as much the duty of society, while it punishes the offender, to pity his condition, and employ means for his reformation, as it is to mete out the punishment he deserves. This fact once settled, proves that the same law is infinitely enforced in the divine government; for all those higher virtues which he demands of us to practise, are in kind analagous to his attributes of infinite perfection.

Whether we look in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, we see the *law of progression* legibly imprinted. We can think of nothing in the government of the Creator, which even has the appearance of non-progressiveness. Generation after generation, the world is furnished with things animate and inanimate, although decay and death is everywhere perceived. Winter *kills*:—summer mercifully *restores life*. The justice of God is continually visiting upon man the reward of transgression, yet mercy is unceasingly at work to heal the wound which justice inflicts. And is it possible to conceive of a mo-

*ment*, when this attribute of glorious perfection will cease to operate? Having the ability and power to devise means to rescue man from the fires of hell; yea, having employed means sufficient for the accomplishment of that purpose already, will God in very truth not persevere in His endeavours to pluck them from such exquisite torments? He requires of man to act differently towards man! those who practise his commands most perfectly, would in the greatest degree desire, that even devils might be converted, liberated, and permitted to enjoy the smile of God's favour. And shall God, who *dwells* in them;—who is the *cause* of such desires, act otherwise? Let us not think more unworthily of God, than of those who are mere reflections of his perfection.

Again, let us look at the greatest examples which the history of the world furnishes us, of the natural tendency of the Divine government with respect to the past; and then ask ourselves, how it is most likely our Father in heaven will act in the future. Adam was set a perfect man in the garden of Eden.—God's law was to be the rule of his life:—transgression was to be visited by death. We learn, that as soon as Adam sinned, justice inflicted upon him the punishment due to his crime. But although the sentence of justice was irrevocable, yet mercy stepped forth, and both devised and instituted the *means* of his reformation. From being a son of man—a child of wrath—it became the steady purpose of the Creator to exalt him to the amazing height of an affinity with the *Son of his love!*

And again, man living in the antediluvian world, which must almost have been a paradise in comparison with the world that *now is*, waxed more and more wicked, until it became necessary again for justice to stretch

forth his hand and inflict upon him a still greater degree of punishment. Although we see a disposition in man to stand still in his misery, do we perceive in God's government over him, any thing to lead us to the supposition that his mercy has ceased to devise means for his restoration? Why did he take Abraham to himself; or lead Israel out of Egypt; or give his Son to be a propitiation for the sins of the *whole world*?

If such has been His conduct in the past, is there room for inference, that he will cease thus to act in the future? He bringeth *good* out of *evil*:—he maketh the wrath of man to praise him. Thus *it has been*, and as God is *unchangeable*, reason teaches us that thus *it shall be*.

We will now inquire, what scripture *directly* teaches us on the subject under consideration.

The author would here beg leave to say, that he has never consulted the advocates of universal salvation, as it is commonly received in our day, verbally nor by their writings. The conclusions to which he has arrived with regard to the meaning of the various passages which will claim our attention, have been entirely from reference to the scriptures themselves, and in direct opposition to the prejudices of his education. It is not his intention to weary your minds by lengthy arguments; but with as much simplicity and conciseness as possible, to lay before you the truth, as it is clearly revealed.

“For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life. And not only so, but we also joy in God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.” Rom. 7. 10, 11.

We here learn that mankind, while “being enemies,”

were *reconciled to God* by the death of his Son. From this fact the apostle deduces an argument, which shows most conclusively, that if God, in infinite mercy, was pleased by the death of his Son, to effect a reconciliation with fallen man ; they, being thus reconciled, should most certainly be saved in his life. The certainty of a fact to be accomplished, is more positively inferred from an event already past. “For if, when we,” *i. e.* “we,” the descendants of Adam, “being sinners, were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, *much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved in (i.)* his life ; and” the apostle continues, “not only so, but we,” *i. e.* we Christians, “also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have *now* (at the present time) received the atonement,” or reconciliation. Previous to the repentance of these Christians, and their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, they *were enemies*, although reconciled to God by the death of his Son : *now*, they had accepted of the rich provisions of mercy, and become “friends” of God,—“joint heirs with Christ.”

There is a vast difference between God’s being reconciled to sinners, and sinners being reconciled to God. This distinction must be particularly noticed, or else we involve ourselves in difficulty, and make the apostle appear as contradicting himself. Be it, therefore, distinctly understood ; although mankind are reconciled to God by the death of his Son, that none can profit thereby, or “be saved in his life,” until they *are subdued, or made willing*, to accept the reconciliation, by becoming *reconciled themselves* ; which can only be effected *through faith in Jesus Christ*.

“But not as the offence, so also *is* the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead ; much more

the grace of God, and the gift by grace, *which is* by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. And not as *it was* by one that sinned, *so is* the gift: for the judgment *was* by one to condemnation, but the free gift *is* of many offences unto justification. For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ: Therefore, as by the offence of one, *judgment came* upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, *the free gift came* upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners; so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." Rom. v. 15—19.

The general tenor of this passage is so manifest, that comment appears unnecessary.

"But not as *the offence*, so also *the free gift*." "The offence" alludes to Adam's transgression; while "the free gift" alludes to the *favour* which the Creator extended to the human family, by the institution of the plan of salvation: "For," the apostle continues, "if through the offence of one, *many be dead*: MUCH MORE *the grace of God*, and *the gift in grace*, which is of one man, Jesus Christ, *abounds UNTO MANY*." "The grace of God" which is extended to the human family, is *a consequence* of "*the free gift*." "*The gift in grace*" (ἡ δωρεὰ ἐν χάριτι) points particularly to the atonement, voluntarily wrought out for the sins of the world, by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: in consequence thereof, God became reconciled to sinners.

"*The free gift*," (τὸ χάρισμα,) is not as "*the offence*;" for "*the offence*," and consequent condemnation, was on account of one man sinning; but "*the free gift*," not

only covers the personal offence of Adam, but extends more freely and more certainly to the family of man, than did the effects of the fall. Death, was in consequence of the *offence of ONE*; but "*the free gift*," *abounds unto MANY*. As it is infallibly certain, that "*the many*," (οἱ πολλοί.) *which died* in consequence of Adam's sin, alludes to the whole human family, so there is no more reason to doubt but that "*the many*," (τοὺς πολλοὺς,) to whom *the grace of God*, and *the gift in grace*, so richly abounds, has an equal extent of signification.

The idea which the apostle conveys by this antithesis, is as follows: the plan of salvation is far more glorious and extensive, than was the fall of man ignominious and fatal: or, in other words;—if the fall of man was disastrous, as it involved the whole human family in its consequences; the glorious plan of redemption, (comparatively speaking,) was far more than adequate to its entire restoration.

"But not as *by one that sinned, the gift*." The apostle here guards against the abuse of the glorious information which he had just stated.

The sin of Adam made it infallibly certain, that all his seed would possess a sinful nature, and thus be prone to sin: but although such is the case, he would have them remember, that it was not equally as certain, that they would immediately inherit "*the gift*," (το δῶρημα,) whether they would or not, as they inherited their corrupt nature. It is not unlikely that some, in the days of the apostle, supposed such to have been the fact; as, in our day, there are not wanting those who erroneously believe and teach the same for scripture truth.

The reason *why the gift* (το δῶρημα) is "*not as by one that sinned*," is thus stated to be "*because the judgment*

(or sentence) was by one to condemnation." That is, on account of sin, man had been condemned by the Creator, and He could not release the condemned, *except* upon certain conditions which He was pleased to institute, *viz.* *repentance* and *faith*. "The gift," (τὸ δῶγμα,) is the free-will offering of SALVATION BY FAITH, which is extended without distinction, to the whole human family; but which cannot possibly be made available in the case of any, otherwise than by complying with the conditions. Its acceptance brings the individual under entirely new relations;—from enmity, to friendship—from a state of nature, to a state of grace. God has not only been reconciled to him by the death of his Son, but he has become reconciled to God, by faith in the all-sufficiency of the same Lord Jesus Christ. He can now say, "Abba, Father!!"

"But the *free gift*." (τὸ χάρισμα.) This "free gift" is entirely different from "*the gift*," (τὸ δῶγμα,)—although they are both unmerited gifts of sovereign grace. The *χάρισμα*, embraces in its signification, all those gifts, and that calling of God, which Paul saith "are *without* repentance." Rom. xi. 32. These gifts are independent of, and antecedent to, repentance and faith: whereas, on the other hand, the *δῶγμα*, can only be obtained *by repentance and faith*.

"The free gift is *from many offences, unto justification*." The institution of the plan of salvation, was expressly designed to counteract the whole effect of sin;—to release the guilty from a state of condemnation, by providing means for their justification. The means employed, are sufficient to accomplish the end for which they were ordained. This "free gift" is extended to the whole human family, and all shall be made partakers of

the fullness of its advantages, before Christ will deliver up the kingdom to the Father: for, he “must reign, till he hath put *all enemies* under his feet:” *i. e.* until “*all shall be SUBDUED* under him.” 1 Cor. xv. 25—28.

“For if by one man’s offence, death reigned by one,” *i. e.* if by the sin of Adam all mankind were involved in death, “*much more* they which receive abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life, by one, Jesus Christ.” As “*the free gift*” (τὸ χάρισμα) of God to the whole human family, includes “this abundance of grace, and of the gift of righteousness,” it follows, as a matter of course, that all mankind “shall (ultimately) reign in life through Jesus Christ.”

The consequences of Adam’s sin, is here placed in opposition to the merciful provision which God has made for the entire restoration of the human family. As surely as death reigned *by one*, shall all reign *by one*, *Jesus Christ*; because “*the abundance of grace, and the gift of righteousness*,” have been freely given to all. These are the evidences of God’s love to “*sinners*:”—these are the positive proofs of his being reconciled to his “*enemies*:” although, as we said before, they are only rendered available, by sinful man becoming reconciled to Him who is already reconciled to them by the death of his Son. All who have already been gathered together *in Christ*, even *now* reign with Him; and he is not only a propitiation for their sins, *but also* “*for the sins of the whole world*.” “It is a true saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to *save sinners*.”

The eighteenth verse fixes the *meaning* and *extent* of the preceding one in the most clear and positive manner. The consequence resulting from the righteousness of Christ, is placed in opposition to that which resulted from

the offence of Adam. We are informed, as distinctly as words can express, that as *condemnation came upon all men in consequence of one offence*; so, also, did *justification of life come upon all men in consequence of the righteousness of one*. "Therefore, as by the *offence of one*, (judgment) came upon *all men* unto *condemnation*; even so, by the *righteousness of one* (the gift in grace, came) upon *all men* unto *justification of life*."

*Judgment.* This word is not in the Greek, but it is plainly implied, and is stated in the sixteenth verse.

*The free gift*, as it is in the common English version, or, as we have substituted in its stead, *the gift in grace*, are not in the original text; but it is very evident, that the latter is implied by the apostle, and not the former; for "*the free gift*" is not in consequence of the righteousness of Christ; but the *righteousness of Christ is a consequence of the free gift*, which the Creator was pleased to extend to the human family at the fall. On the other hand, we know, from verse fifteen, that "the gift in grace" came by the righteousness "of one man, Jesus Christ."

As the consequence of Adam's offence has been progressing, and will progress, until the final consummation of earthly things, so the righteousness of Christ, as it has been progressing, so it will continue to progress, until He shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father. As Adam was the instrumental cause of death to "all men," so the righteousness of Christ is the instrumental cause of life to "all men;" although it is as great folly to suppose, that any can partake of the righteousness of Christ without experiencing the "new birth unto righteousness," as it is to suppose, that any one could partake of the nature of Adam, who had not been born of the seed of Adam. "Ye MUST be born again," says our Saviour. John iii. 7.

After having stated that condemnation came upon all men by the offence of one, and on the other hand, that justification of life came upon all men by the righteousness of one, the apostle takes occasion to explain himself more freely, by saying, "For as by one man's disobedience, *MANY* were made sinners," *i. e.* all were made sinners, "so by the obedience of one, *SHALL MANY* be made righteous." ver. 19. No language can be more explicit. The *obedience of Christ* is placed in opposition to, and counterbalances the evil effect of, *the disobedience of Adam*. A literal translation of this verse is more emphatic. For as by the disobedience of *the one man*, *the many* [οἱ πολλοί] were made sinners: *so also* [οὕτω καὶ] by the obedience of *the one* (Christ) shall *the many* [οἱ πολλοί] be made righteous.

As it is certain that *the many* which were made sinners, includes the whole family of man, so it is equally as certain, if language is at all to be depended upon, that the apostle really meant by *the many* which "shall be made righteous," to include *all*, or "*the many*" which were made sinners. Thus we have seen how plain the teaching of Paul is in this passage of scripture: and as we progress, we think that the same glorious doctrine will be rendered more distinct.

We will next turn our attention to Rom. viii. 18—24:

"For I reckon, that the sufferings of this present time *are not worthy to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected *the same* in hope: Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glo-

rious liberty of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now: and not only *they*, but ourselves also, which have the first-fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, *to wit*, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?"

We think this passage teaches universal salvation with perfect distinctness. The apostle here undertakes to prove, from the experience of the human family, the certainty of a future state of existence. He says nothing of the *correctness* of the expectation of being made happy hereafter, as it is generally entertained by mankind, but merely refers to the expectation as a *fact*, which of itself is a strong presumptive proof of its divine origin, and therefore to be relied upon.

The reason *why* Paul educes this argument, is to confirm the faith of those who had but recently put on Christ—who had just turned from the worship of idols, or from the vain philosophy of heathen moralists. It was necessary that all the powers of the world to come should be set before the eyes of their understanding, to stimulate them to walk worthy of their high calling; for while they were taught the certainty of future bliss, they were also reminded that none could possibly partake of it, but they who had passed from condemnation unto life, through the blood of Jesus; that to be partakers of the likeness of his resurrection, it was necessary they should be planted together in the likeness of his death. Thus while he sets forth the universal expectation of man, as an argument in favour of future happiness, he at the same time affirms that they alone are "*sons of God*,"

who "*are led by the spirit of God.*" "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live;" that is, "the spirit that raised up Jesus from the dead, shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his spirit, that dwelleth in you." It was necessary that Paul should remind them, that the condition of their glorification in the future state depended upon their willingness, in the present life, to suffer with Christ; for the tendency of the human heart is towards present gratification, practically regardless of future good, but theoretically buoyed up by delusive hopes.

After Paul had stated the universal expectation that reigns in the bosom of man, he also adds, in accordance with what he had previously said in chapter fifth, that the expectation will finally be realised, although by no means according to the fallacious hope of the carnal heart. He does not say *how* or *when* this will be consummated, but merely states the fact.

Now, let it be borne in mind, that the apostle's purpose was principally to confirm the faith, and to brighten the hope of the sincere follower of Christ. To such, he says, there is no condemnation; and having passed from death unto life, he would have them remember that "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed" in them; and *then*, to prove the reality of such a state of bliss to which he referred, he alludes to the instinctive *hope*, that to a greater or less extent is entertained by the whole human family: "For the earnest (or anxious) expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." This is the universal expectation. It is another question, whether or not this expectation will

be realised in the *manner* which the great majority of mankind fondly *hope*.

There never has been a nation without some form of religion; and every system of religion ever devised by man, however corrupt or abominable, has held forth to its votaries the expectation of what was considered to be, *the chief good*—that which they *had not* in the present life, (except in a very limited degree,) and which was regarded by them as the highest gift of the divinity.

Although there have been men who have detected the various fallacies and glaring inconsistencies of the prevailing systems, and although there have been not a few who have professed to discard the whole system of revealed religion, yet, as *a whole*, we can say, without contradiction, that the human family professes to believe, not only in a future state of existence, but *also*, that all who perform what is considered to be *duty*, or things *which ought to be done*, shall ultimately enjoy future bliss: and not only so, it is a remarkable *fact*, that mankind generally expect to *gain the prize*, somehow or other, although they may be willing to acknowledge and quake with fear, when they remember that their present life is not *what it should be*: hope, which is so deeply implanted in the human breast, generally burns bright, even when conscience is pronouncing condemnation. “There is scarcely an individual,” says that popular writer, *Thomas Dick*, “who admits the doctrine of the immortality of man, who does not indulge a certain degree of hope, that he shall be admitted into a happier world, when his spirit wings its way from this earthly scene. Even the man of the world, the profligate, and the debauchee, notwithstanding their consciousness of guilt, and the opposition of their affections to the divine law, and the duties

of the Christian life, are frequently found buoying themselves up, in the midst of their unhallowed courses, with the vain *expectation*, that an all-merciful Creator will not suffer them *ultimately* to sink into perdition, but will pity their weaknesses and follies, and receive them, when they die, into the joys of heaven." *That conscience* which has been lulled into a state of carnal security, by the opiates of infidelity, did *once* speak with distinctness: it not only promised future life, but future bliss, as a reward for the faithful performance of duty; and until it had been seared as with "*a hot iron*," it ceased not to perform its functions; so that those who have the appearance of being exceptions to the *general rule*, are not so in reality. As long as conscience continues to operate, it proclaims *a future life*, and so long does the human heart fondly *hope* to escape the consequences of sin hereafter, and be made happy.

This natural longing for immortality is that to which Paul refers in the present verse: "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." This *fact* being *fully comprehended* by those to whom he wrote, would greatly fortify them against all those delusions of the human mind, which tend to overturn the convictions of reason and conscience, or to counteract the teaching of revelation; it would stimulate them to labour hard to obtain the incorruptible crown of life, and so to run in the race set before them in the gospel, "not as uncertainly," or as those beating the air, but as those who had the most *positive evidence* that their labour would not be in vain.

κτίσις (creature) embraces in its signification the whole human family. Without any exceptions, all who have ever breathed the breath of life, have been partakers of

the infection of the "creature," forasmuch as, in this respect, a perfect unity of nature has been constantly propagated from one generation to another. "For the creature" (ver. 20) of which Christians in the present life, although spiritually renewed, are a part, "was made subject to vanity *not willingly*;" that is, not voluntarily—not of choice. Here the apostle carries the mind immediately back to the fall of man, and makes known to us *the fact*, that "the creature was made subject to vanity not willingly" on the part of the Creator. Adam's happiness would have remained perfect, and God would have been glorified, had it not been for the offence; but as a *free agent*, the continuation of his happiness depended upon himself: it was agreeable to the Creator's will, that his happiness should have continued, but it was forfeited by transgression. *Justice* required the full infliction of the penalty of disobedience on the offenders, but Mercy came forth to open a door of escape to fallen man; and thus he "was made subject *to vanity not willingly*" on the Creator's part, but he was thus made, so that in due time he might be delivered from the condemnation of a broken law, and be made a partaker of the divine nature. So glorious and mysterious is the plan of salvation, that man, subject as he is to vanity, is exceedingly blest, while cheered with such "*a hope*" as is held forth in the glad tidings of salvation. The whole prospect of future happiness, is in consequence of the sovereign mercy of God. If *mercy* had not

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"contrived the way  
To save rebellious man,"

the human family would have been cut off in its infancy, and consigned to endure the just penalty of transgression.

"Because the creature itself also (which has been sub-

jected in, or upon hope), *shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*" ver. 21. Here is a very plain reason *why* the creature was made subject to vanity, instead of being cut off, when Adam had transgressed: "*because it shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption.*" This freedom was purchased by the sufferings of the Lamb of God; He, *by his one oblation of himself once offered, made a FULL, PERFECT, and SUFFICIENT sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the WHOLE WORLD.* His gracious work will be perfected, when all will have been subdued unto him, and the kingdom delivered up to God, even the Father. As the whole human family fell *in Adam*, their federal head, so will they be redeemed *in Christ*, the federal head of the spiritual creation.

The apostle, after having made the assertion that "the creature shall be delivered," appeals to the experience of those to whom he wrote, as to the real condition of the "creature," or human family. "For we know," says he, "that the whole creation, [τὰ ὅσα ἡ κτίσις, that *all* or *every creature*,] groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," ver. 22, and therefore stand in absolute need of deliverance, as all have gone out of the way. The connection of the apostle's argument is most perfect, and we are left without doubt as to the meaning and extent of "the creature."

The next verse is intended to corroborate *the fact* just mentioned. It is an appeal to the experience of those who, although delivered from the bondage of the law, are yet confined to a sinful body:—although, having received the spirit of adoption, yet at the same time *groan*, being subject to the infirmities of "the creature." "And not only," he adds, is it true that the

creature groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now, "but ourselves also, which have the FIRST FRUITS of the Spirit, EVEN WE *ourselves* groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." ver. 23.

No language could be stronger, or more perfectly natural, than that here used, in support of the argument which has just been laid down, and which we believe to be the real meaning of the passage. We are involved in inextricable difficulty the moment we endeavour to put any other construction upon the apostle's argument. The apostle here carries the mind from the *general* condition of the creature, to the *particular* condition of the most favoured portion of the whole, and for further *proof* of the real state of the whole human family, he could go no further; and therefore, after having clearly stated the important fact which led him *to digress*, he stops short, and again resumes the line of argument which he had momentarily discontinued. He had said in the eighteenth verse, "For I reckon that the sufferings of the present time," &c. Now, he continues, "For we are saved by hope."

I would here merely add, in passing, that as *the first-fruits* are an assurance of the ingathering of the whole harvest, so are those now brought into the Church, and presented to the Father through Jesus Christ, and who have the *first-fruits* of the Spirit, a certain indication of the ingathering of *the whole creature*.

Thus we have had another, and as clear a proof of the doctrine of universal salvation, as it is possible for us to conceive: and far from making the terrors of the law less operative upon the consciences of the wicked, I think a full view of the whole subject will have the contrary effect.

Nothing can have a better effect in taming the almost indomitable passions of mankind, than an intelligent view of *infinite mercy*, when linked with *infinite justice*. If *mercy* operates so beneficially between man and man, although practised so meagerly; the Divine mercy, as extended to imperfect beings, will consequently have infinitely greater effect upon those, whose minds are open to perceive their relation and obligation to the Author of their existence. Convince the mind of man of the *infinite love of God*, and of *his own condition by nature*, and the consequence is almost sure to be favourable. Is there any other band than love, sufficiently strong to bind the Christian to the Creator? When the soul becomes reconciled to God, in Christ, *love* not only constrains it to abide faithful, but also to labour for the interests of other immortal souls. (2 Cor. v. 14.) Love is the feast of the Church below, as well as of the Church above: it is the key, by which we are enabled to unlock, and perceive the cause of all the sufferings and privations which the holy army of martyrs endured; and especially of those which the noble Paul sustained, as he followed in the footsteps of his Divine Master. Would he convince Christians of the preciousness of the Gospel of Christ?—hear him!—"But God commendeth his *love* towards us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly." Rom. v. 8. "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." Rom. i. 16. Would he drive away their fears, and confirm their faith; he says, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Rom. viii. 35. John says, "And we have *known* and *believed* the *love* that God hath to us." 1 John. iv. 16. "God is love." And again, "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he

first loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." 1 John iv. 2. Think you, that any thing can be more effectual than *love*, to lead man to *love*: or, could the Almighty assume a more terrible aspect to a rebellious, but *reasonable* creature, than that of being clothed with LOVE? When the consequence of transgression, *viz. eternal punishment*, is fully set before the mind of the sinner, will it not be heightened by the thought of the exceeding great wickedness of sinning against Him who has done so much for his salvation? When fully sensible of his guilt, will it in truth be necessary for the eternal Judge to pronounce his doom? or, will he not become both his own accuser and judge? All the condemned will be compelled to say, "Just and right is He."

It is likely, some men would be disposed to say, even if the scriptures teach universal salvation, it were better for the cause of souls, if that particular doctrine were kept in obscurity. Paul thought otherwise. He would have the Church particularly to understand the whole mystery of the scheme of redemption. Nothing but the proper understanding and appreciation of the whole work, will ever be sufficiently operative, to make Christians *in general* faithful to their high calling.

As soon as a cloud of error began to darken the horizon of the primitive Church, *piety declined*, and continued to decline in proportion as truth was subverted, until the blackness of darkness nearly obscured the gracious light of the Gospel from the eyes of the world: but as soon as the Reformation of the sixteenth century began to disperse the mists of error, its light was extended almost to the ends of the earth. "The people that walked in darkness," then perceived "a great light." For the greatest blessings *we* enjoy, we are indebted to the

increased light shed forth from the holy scriptures ; whose truths alone, if followed, will bring to man, peace, prosperity, and happiness, both present and eternal.

Do not the conflicts which rend the Christian Church tell us, as by a voice from heaven, that it has not as yet, attained unto the whole truth ? And if so great blessings result from the imperfect knowledge which we now have of the sacred scriptures, is it not exceedingly desirable for us, and for the world, to have the whole truth ? How can we hope to attain unto the truth ? Is it by remaining stationary ? or by anxiously, prayerfully, and perseveringly inquiring, with unprejudiced minds, to know the whole mystery of God ? For what are the holy scriptures given ? Are they given to illuminate the minds of glorified saints, or sinful man ? Think you, that the Creator would mock at the miseries of man, by giving him a revelation which, in his present state, he could not understand ? What meaning can we attach to the word *revelation*, but that which implies *an uncovering* of those mysteries, unto which fallen man could not otherwise attain ? In the future life, we will need no such revelation.

Another portion of the chapter which we have just been considering, demands our attention. It reads thus :

“ And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be* conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called ; and whom he called, them he also justified ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall

we then say to these things? If God *be* for us, who *can* be against us?" Rom. viii. 28—31.

Those designated as "called according to the purpose," ver. 28, are Christians. As soon as man had fallen, the plan of salvation, by which the sinner could pass from death unto life, was put in operation. It was so arranged, as not to interfere with the *divine perfection* on the one hand, or the freedom of man's will on the other. In this way, God can be just, and yet justify sinners.

One of the most marked features in the word of God, is the universality of its invitation: "Whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Rev. xxii. 17. But in order to make this invitation or call available, there are certain obvious duties required. Those who comply with the conditions, or in other words, accept of the proposition of the Almighty, are said to be "called according to his purpose," or proposition. Thus, while it is evident that all are called to accept of the gracious gift according to the *proposition* held out in the Gospel; yet none are absolutely benefited thereby, but those who truly love God, and comply with the prescribed conditions. Thus, we are led to discriminate between those who are actually *called according to the proposition*, and those who have not accepted of the invitation of the Gospel.

Paul adopts the very same mode of reasoning *here*, as he did in that portion of the present chapter which we have just considered. There, he proves, that the present sufferings of Christians "are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed" in them, *from the universal "expectation of the creature."* Here, he brings forth an argument to show, that "all things work together for

good, to them that love God," *from the fact, that those whom he foreknew, "he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son."* And inasmuch as he predestinated all mankind to be saved, (as it will be our endeavour presently to show,) it was perfectly evident, that those who had already complied with his requisitions, would be regarded with special favour:—that to them, "all things would work together for good."

But to proceed: "For whom he did *foreknow*." ver. 29. Who are they whom God did not foreknow? As soon as man had fallen, He foresaw the condition of every soul that would be born into the world, and that *plan* which He ordained, was *intended* to rescue all from the condemnation of a broken law: He is not willing that any should perish. "Jesus Christ, the righteous," says John, "*is not only a propitiation for our sins, but also for the sins of the whole world.*" 1 John ii. 2. As God is "*no respecter of persons*," we may rest assured, that the glorious plan of salvation was not designed for a certain favoured few, as the Jews,—as even the apostles at first selfishly supposed. *Mercy* was extended *free*, that all might partake of its life-giving efficacy.

Is it possible for the Almighty *to plan*, and *to will*, and be unable to perform? If Christ is the propitiation for the sins of the whole world, shall that propitiation be unavailable to any? If all have been *reconciled to God* by the death of his Son; shall the Son cease to reign, until those whom he hath *purchased* with His own blood shall have been subdued unto him?—until all his jewels will have been made up?

Peter speaking of Christ, says, "who verily was fore-ordained," or *foreknown*, (*προεγνωσμένου*), "before the foundation of the world; but was made manifest in these

last times for you." 1 Pet. i. 20. For what purpose was he *foreknown*? Was it not to redeem fallen man from *death*? Shall He fail in performing His work? He "was manifested in these last times" for the Gentiles, who were entirely overlooked by the Jews. "If I be lifted up," says the Saviour, "I will draw ALL men unto me."

The extent of those *foreknown*, once ascertained, disrobes that which follows of all difficulty; forasmuch, as such were also *predestinated*; and those predestinated, *called*, &c. While such is the case, our argument is far from resting simply upon this fact.

Before we endeavour to prove that all mankind were predestinated "to be conformed to the image of the Son," by reference to other portions of scripture, where the word  $\pi\epsilon\sigma\sigma\epsilon\iota\zeta\omega$  (to predestinate) is used, we ask: Do not the scriptures invite ALL to accept of the provisions of mercy, and thus to be conformed to this image? If this is not the case, why do they ask "Why will ye die?" Jer. xxvii. 13. Why were the apostles commanded to preach the Gospel to "every creature," if a portion of mankind had been predestinated to eternal damnation? Why is the commission given to Christians to say to all, "come," if any cannot possibly comply with the invitation?

If we ask Paul, if God predestinated *all*; he answers, "As in Adam *all* die, even so in Christ, *shall all* be made *alive*." 1 Cor. xv. 22. If we are yet in doubt, we hear him say, "as by *one* man's disobedience, *many* were made sinners; so by the obedience of *one*, shall *many* be made righteous." Rom. v. 19.

After the Jews had abused their trust, and not only disregarded the voice of, but killed, the prophets sent unto them, God determined to send His own Son into the world, that both Jew and Gentile might have bold-

ness to enter into the holiest by His most precious blood, by *a new and living way*. Heb. x. 20. What He determined before, or predestinated, to be done, He also performed.

In Acts iv. 27, 28, it thus reads: "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom Thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever Thy hand and Thy council *determined before* (προώρισε) to be done." In this passage we have the *first* example in the New Testament of the word, προορίζω:—which, at least, shows the steadfastness of the Divine purpose.

After passing over the two instances found in the passage now under consideration, we next find it used in 1 Cor. ii. 7, where it thus reads: "But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God *ordained* (προωρίσεν) before the world, which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." The Jews did not understand the Divine purpose, or the mystery of God, or "they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." Why would they not have crucified him? Because, they would have understood, what their *prejudices* would not permit them to understand; that the plan of salvation which God had instituted, was not confined to a portion of the human family, but was intended to embrace *all*. "Take heed brethren, lest any of you fall, after the example of their unbelief." If any thing can be learned from actions, then, if a portion of mankind were predestinated to eternal damnation, surely those, who killed the Lord of glory, must have been among that number: and yet, withal we

are told, that if *THEY had known the mystery* which God foreordained, or predestinated, they would not have done what they did!! Surely, if they had *known positively* that the Almighty had predestinated them to eternal condemnation, this knowledge would only have served as fuel to increase the flame of their hatred!! But no; if *they had known* the exceeding great love of God, they would have acted otherwise: and they who died impenitent, would have been saved, by being assimilated to the image of the Son of God, and therefore, would have been among the “first fruits” of that glorious harvest yet to be gathered into the garner of the Lord.

Προορίζω (to predestinate) is found in the *fifth* and *eleventh* verses of Paul’s Epistle to the Ephesians. The first thirteen verses read as follows:

“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ. Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy, and without blame before him in love: having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved: in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he had purposed in himself: that in the

dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one, all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth: *even* in him, in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; that we should be to the praise of his glory, who FIRST TRUSTED in Christ. In whom YE also TRUSTED, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise."

After the usual opening salutation, the apostle breaks forth in grateful praise to Almighty God, "who hath blessed *us* with all spiritual blessings in Christ." ver. 3. We are not to suppose that "*us*" here alludes to Christians only. Mankind in *general*—Gentile as well as Jew, are blessed with spiritual blessings; but these blessings are only to be found *in Christ*. He is the fount of all blessings. Our present existence, as well as the hope of eternal life, depends upon him. None can become participants in these blessings, but those who submit themselves to Christ: such are as branches united to the *true vine*, and partake of the advantages of that union: they thus *become according as they were chosen in him before the foundation of the world*. ver. 4. The Christian stood upon the same ground as any other sinner, before his conversion; he was then *not what he was chosen to be*, and continued so until he turned his eyes to Christ for salvation: and so, he who now stands in the same perilous situation, estranged from God, is not what he was chosen to be, from the foundation of the world. Thus while all were chosen in Christ, yet none are what they were chosen to be, until they are *in*

*Christ,*” and *then* they are “holy, and without blame before him in love.”

In the fifth verse, the apostle informs us, that mankind were *predestinated* “unto the adoption of children, by (or through) Jesus Christ to himself,” *i. e.* to God. The reason why God thus predestinated man, was not because of any desert on his part, but “according to the good pleasure of His will: to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein” or in which [*εἰς* ᾗ] act of grace, “he hath made us accepted in the Beloved,” ver. 6; that is, He became *reconciled* to us “by the death of his Son,” as the apostle on a previous occasion informed us. Rom. v. 10. But, although God hath accepted the atonement, whereby he became reconciled to those who were by nature “enemies, yet it does not follow that they have availed themselves of the consequent advantages. For *enemies*, to be “reconciled to God, by the death of his Son,” or, in other words, “to be accepted in the Beloved,” is an unspeakably great advantage: but until they seek redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins,” *i. e.* until they become reconciled themselves, they still remain *enemies*, and as such have the sentence of death abiding in them. We do not become reconciled to God *antecedently* to his becoming reconciled to us: it was necessary that God should first be “reconciled” to us—that we should first be “accepted in the Beloved,” *before* it could avail us any thing to seek “redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.”

“Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure, which he had purposed in himself.” ver. 9. None will pretend to say that the *mystery made known*, was to be confined to Christians alone: therefore “us,” in this verse, as in

several foregoing instances, is not to be limited to any particular portion of the human family. The "mystery" was designed as much for the heathen, as for the civilised world; it was primarily intended, not for the righteous, but for sinners, that they might be persuaded to become righteous.

The tenth verse declares what the "mystery" is, which he purposed in himself, viz: "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, [τὰ πάντα ἐν τῷ Χριστῷ—the all in Christ,] both which are in heaven, and which are on earth." Here we are told that "*the all*" shall be gathered together *under one head in Christ*. Can all be under one head, if any be finally rejected? If all *shall be in Christ*, *can* any be perpetually *out of Christ*? Shall God purpose to do, and be unable to perform? ✓

The apostle then continues: "In whom ALSO WE have obtained an inheritance, [ἐκλεγώθημεν—were chosen,] being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will: that we should be to the praise of his glory, who FIRST TRUSTED in Christ." verses 11, 12. Mark, here the sudden transition from the general tenor of the foregoing argument, (3—10 verses,) to the particular application which he now makes of it. *In whom also we were chosen*. The apostle, in this place, does not allude to the Ephesians, but only to those "who *first trusted* in Christ," among whom he was numbered. ἐκλεγώθημεν, implies that they (Christians) *were chosen* by a certain process: thus they were chosen or accepted in Christ, by the exercise of *faith*, and consequently were predestinated, not only in the sense that *all are predestinated unto the adoption of children*, but they were "predesti-

nated according to the purpose (plan, or proposition) of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will ;” that is, they had accepted of the provisions of mercy, according as they were declared in the scriptures, and had thus received the “adoption,” whereby they were enabled to cry Abba, Father. In this way, it is *God’s will* that all should be *predestinated*; and for the accomplishment of this purpose, He has left nothing undone. “All things are ready!” The condition upon which man’s salvation hangs, is simply, “Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.” God can be just, and the justifier of those *alone* who BELIEVE in Jesus.

Having declared the fact of their acceptance, *who first trusted in Christ*, the apostle thus continues: “In WHOM ALSO YE (trusted), after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.” Thus the Ephesians, by accepting of the offers of salvation, became “*predestinated according to THE PURPOSE* of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His will.”

Such appears to be the only intelligible outline of this interesting and important portion of sacred scripture. After having extended the usual salutation to the Ephesian Church, we hear Paul, in a *general manner*, declare the whole counsel of God. (3—10 verses.) And *then*, we hear him speak of the actual participation in the merciful provisions of the Gospel, on the part of those “who first trusted in Christ.” (verses 11, 12.) And *afterwards*, he reminds the Ephesians, that they *also* had given heed to the offers of salvation through Christ, and consequently “were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise;” on which account, in a perfectly natural manner, he goes

on to speak of the pleasure and interest which such an assurance gave him: "Wherefore I also, having heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the the saints, cease not to give thanks for you," &c.

Thus, we have endeavoured to show, that God not only *foreknew*, but *predestinated* ALL to be conformed to the image of His Son. This intelligence, while it should cause the blush of shame to arise, in the case of those who have rejected so great salvation, and make them tremble, lest in consequence of their hardness of heart, God should suddenly consign them to the fire of an eternal perdition; yet at the same time, it is calculated to nourish the most delightful *confidence* and *trust* in the experience of those who have complied with the offers of salvation, and consequently, are not only *called*, but "called according to the purpose:" not only *predestinated* in common with others, but "predestinated according to the purpose (plan, or proposition) of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His will." *They* cannot doubt, as to their being among the number of the "*elect*," who are living in the exercise of *faith*; forasmuch as *all* were predestinated to the adoption of children through Jesus Christ according to the good pleasure of God's will, and therefore their *faith*, which unites them to Christ, as the branch is united to the vine, is the constant evidence of their being predestinated according to the purpose.

"And whom he predestinated, he also called." The foregoing verse states, that God *foreknew* and *predestinated* the restoration of fallen man;—that they should "be conformed to the image of His Son." But, man is a *free agent*, and God a *righteous governor*, whose laws had been broken by man; therefore, in the nature of the case, by the mere volition of the infinite mind, independ-

ent of man's free agency, the work of redemption could not be consummated; and for these reasons:—*first*, a restoration after that manner, would have interfered with the freedom of man's will; and if God had destroyed his free agency, there could have been no restoration. If any are inclined to think otherwise, I would merely add to such, that those restored would not be men, but beings of another nature. *Second*, To have restored man without a *sufficient atonement* for his transgression, God would have ceased to act the part of a righteous governor; which thing is as impossible, as it would be for Him to break His own laws:—therefore we are told, those whom He foreknew and predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, “*He also called.*”

It appears almost presumption, for any one to undertake to tell the glorious news, that *all* are invited, or called upon to partake of the *water of LIFE freely*, when God himself, speaks so plainly in the scriptures, that a wayfaring man, though a fool, need not err. Where is the man, who is not called upon to depart from iniquity, and to turn unto the Lord his God, who will *abundantly pardon*?—Where can a soul be found, for whom there is *no salvation*?—Who is not called to look to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world?

Our Saviour says, Matt. xx. 16; xxii. 14, “*Many are called, but few are chosen.*” (ἐκλεκτοί.)—But few are *elect*ed,\* or *selected*. Here is positive evidence that many are called who have not, as yet, been numbered among those elected. “Many,” in the Greek, has frequently the signification of *all*:—for instance, we read “For as by one man's disobedience, *many* were made sinners.” Rom v.

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\* The “*elected*” are those who close in with the offers of salvation, or become converted.

19. Here, we are not left in doubt, as to the signification of “many.”

Paul thus speaks: “By whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among *all nations*, among whom, [or, *among which*] are ye also *called* of Jesus Christ.” Rom. i. 5, 6. As soon as the new dispensation was fully opened, the wall of partition, which separated the Jew and the Gentile world, was broken down: the Gospel was preached to *all nations*. The command was, “Go ye unto all the world, and preach the Gospel to every creature.” Therefore, the apostle adds, “among which (nations) are ye *also* called of Jesus Christ.” The whole Roman people are here included;—they, with other nations, were “called of Jesus Christ.” The Gospel was preached to the *whole nation*, and not only to a chosen few.

In the next verse, when he *particularly* addresses the Christian Church at Rome, he used the same word, *κλητος*, (called,) but he qualifies it by another, which gives it a particular signification. We are not left in doubt, as to whom he there alludes. The Greek is not *called to be saints*, but *κλητοῖς ἁγίοις*: CALLED SAINTS: which expression is equivalent to *ἐκλεκτος* (elected,) or *πιστός* (faithful.) All may become *called saints*, but not until they accept of the offers of salvation, *by faith*. The same phrase is used in the salutation to the Corinthian Church: “To the Church of God which is at Corinth, sanctified in Christ Jesus—*called saints*.” (*κληταῖς ἁγίοις*.) 1 Cor. i. 2. And in the twenty-third and twenty-fourth verses of the same chapter, it thus reads: “But we preach Christ crucified; unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but to the *called*, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the power of God.” The expression “both Jews

and Greeks," is used in accommodation, to represent the whole human family. *All* were *called*; and therefore, Paul preached the Gospel to all, whether it would become a stumbling-block to the Jew, or foolishness to the Greek. While all are called, yet it is necessary for us to be *in Christ*, and *constantly* cling to him *by faith*, if we would have our *calling* sure. We will add nothing further at present on the remainder of the thirtieth verse.

If it is granted that God *foreknew*, *predestinated*, or *called*, the whole human family, the extent of *either* immediately establishes the limit of the others. For the several particulars mentioned are so connected, that an attempt to make the extent of their signification unequal, wrests from the passage every appearance of sense, and consequently leaves the mind in utter uncertainty. He who is satisfied that God "*foreknew*" *all*, is shut up to the conclusion that *all* are "*predestinated*." The same conclusion inevitably follows, if it is granted that all are *called*," &c.

No passage in the volume of inspiration conveys to man matter more wonderful, great, and glorious, than that which has now, in part, received our brief attention. The apostle, in a masterly manner, peculiarly his own, summed up in one powerful strain, the whole subject, which he had previously more largely considered.

The next portion of sacred scripture which will claim our attention, is the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians. In the twenty-second verse, we are informed, that "*as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive*." It appears unnecessary to occupy much of our time upon a passage so divested of ambiguity. If language is at all to be depended upon, it can have but *one* meaning.

As there can be no doubt as to *all* having died in Adam, then why should we hesitate to believe the glorious assurance which inspiration holds forth, when we are told “*even so in Christ shall all be made alive.*” To be “in Christ,” is to be “a new creature;” therefore, if *all* who have died in Adam, are to be “in Christ,” then shall *all* be made *new creatures*, or “be made alive.” Is such a saying or such a scheme of mercy unworthy of the God of love? Let not our conceptions of his attributes be bounded by our blunted and feeble sense. Think you, that He who formed the glorious plan of salvation, by which sinners may be justified, without interfering with his attribute of justice, could not have extended it infinitely further and more glorious, than we in this state of existence are able to conceive! “Can we by searching find out God? can we find out the Almighty unto perfection? It is as high as heaven, what canst thou do?—deeper than hell, what canst thou know?” If God had not given us a revelation of his will, we would have been in worse than Egyptian darkness, with respect to all his plans and purposes: then why should we not believe what he so plainly teaches, even though it is not according to his will to disclose to us that which belongs to another state of existence? We have no right to expect a revelation of any thing, but that which relates to *the present* situation of the human family.

It were better to be among the number of those who believe, admire, and adore infinite wisdom for what has been declared, even though it were too much for the mind to conceive, than to stand with those who doubt, because they are unable to comprehend, or those who bend the word of God to suit their particular views of the scheme of redemption.

He who can prove that the last member of the sentence before us, is not equally as extensive as the first, can make darkness light, and light darkness; he can darken "counsel, by words without knowledge." But, thanks be to God, that we are not left to our own imaginings on this momentous subject. Other portions of God's word testify to the *same truth*, which is here so distinctly taught; and especially have we reason to be thankful, that Paul in this chapter states, (although in few words,) the *order* in which the great work will ultimately be accomplished.

The arguments of the apostle, if examined attentively, will always be found to flow in a perfectly natural channel. In none of his writings, would we more confidently expect some information, as to the *order* in which the divine plan would ultimately be accomplished, than in the present chapter; and we are not disappointed, for immediately after he says, "As in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," he adds, "but every man in his own order;" that is, each or every one in the particular order, or *plan ordained* by the Almighty, for the accomplishment of his purpose: and then he immediately subjoins the *order*; which is: 1. "Christ, the first-fruits;" 2. "Afterwards, they that are Christ's, at his coming;" 3. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to the Father," &c. Thus, you perceive *this order* comprehends in it three distinct periods of time, in which *all shall be made alive in Christ*. The *first period*, comprises in it all time between the fall and the second coming of Christ; the *next*, points to the second coming itself; the *third period* extends from the last-named event, until the delivering up the kingdom to the Father.

1. "Christ, the first-fruits." Christ is here represented as the "first-fruits" of all those who will be first in the "order," *i. e.* of those who have or will sleep in him, until the *second coming*: at that time, the first part of the order here declared, will have been completed.

The apostle, in the twentieth verse, says, "But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the *first-fruits* of them that slept," *i. e.* of such as had died in the exercise of *true faith*. With equal propriety, we may say, he is the *first-fruits* of those who *have* slept in him, even though they have just departed this life, or of those who *will* sleep in him, until he shall again come in glorious majesty in the clouds of heaven. Thus, while Christ is the *first-fruits* of those *first* in the "order" assigned, *they* in turn become, as saith James, (i. 18,) "a kind of first-fruits of his creatures;" and it is evident that if Christians are "a kind of first-fruits of his creatures," and if the *first-fruits* are an earnest or pledge of the ingathering of the whole harvest, we may rest assured that all will be saved, forasmuch as all mankind are reckoned among the number of his creatures.

2. "Afterwards, they that are Christ's at his coming." As we suppose there can be no question as to the time here alluded to, by "his coming," (*ἐν τῇ παρουσίᾳ αὐτοῦ*,) we will not detain you, but will pass on to the third and last period of time, in which *all shall be made alive in Christ*.

3. "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power." ver. 24. This will be at the conclusion of the work of redemption; or, in other words, at the end of Christ's mediatorial kingdom.

“For he must reign until he hath put *all enemies under his feet*.” ver. 25. Are not all who are opposed to the righteous government of God, *enemies*? Are not these condemned in hell, *enemies*? Would they remain there, if they were not *enemies*? Paul says, “When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the *ungodly*.” Rom. v. 6. None will limit the *ungodly* to the number of those who become Christians! and in the tenth verse of the same chapter, he adds, “For if, when we were *enemies*, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, *much more*, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” Here we are told, the human family being *enemies*, were *reconciled* to God, and in the verse under consideration, we are told, that the mediatorial reign of Christ shall continue, “until he hath put *all enemies under his feet*!”

We know not how these *enemies* shall be subdued, but we are most distinctly taught that they will. This we do know, that in the purpose of the Father *all* have been put in subjection under his feet, none excepted, although “we see not yet all things put under him.” Heb. ii. 8—10. Christians have already been subdued, or put under his feet, by the “two-edged sword” that proceedeth out of his mouth: and this same Jesus shall go forth, “conquering and to conquer,” “till he hath put *all enemies under his feet*.”

“The last enemy that shall be destroyed *is death*.” ver. 26. What is death? Is it merely the termination of natural life? Does *death*, the consequence of Adam’s sin, only involve the dissolution of our mortal existence? or is this mortal existence but the prelude to *that death*, whose horrors all must suffer who die out of Christ? It

becomes us not to fix the meaning of scripture, but to permit it to *teach* us *the truth*.

When *death* shall be destroyed, the consequence of Adam's sin will be terminated: then will be verified the saying, "As in Adam all *die*, even so in Christ shall all be made *alive*."

If the whole work of redemption will have been completed at the second coming of Christ, then we are left in perfect doubt as to the *reason* why the apostle adds, "Then cometh the end," &c. (verses 24—26 ;) and we are in as much doubt as to its *meaning*.

We have now examined *the order*, as laid down by the apostle, in which the work of redemption will be completed: and we think the more carefully this subject is examined, the more conclusive it will appear. Ambiguity, doubt, and perplexity all vanish, and the apostle stands in naked grandeur, declaring with perfect clearness the general outline of the mystery of redeeming grace.

With the above, agrees another saying of Paul: "For God hath concluded *all in unbelief*, that he might have *mercy upon all*." Well might he cry out, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. xi. 32—36.

Before the conversion of Paul, he was an enemy to the cross of Christ, "*dead* in trespasses and sins:" but, as soon as he was made *alive in Christ*, he was constrained by the love of God, not to live for himself, but to labour for those souls who were yet without God and without hope in the world. Would he have laboured for those who could not have received remission of sins? If we ask him why he thus laboured, he answers:

“Because we thus judge, that if *one died for all, then were all dead.*” 2 Cor. vi. 14. This solution is sufficient to account for the interest and labour of all true Christians in the cause of souls. *All* by nature are dead, and Christ died for *all*: therefore they would have all men to come to the knowledge of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and thus at once be subdued by the power of redeeming grace, and numbered among the “first-fruits” of the entire harvest of souls. Christians well know, that if the ungodly die in their sins, they shall be consigned to endure the anguish of an eternal banishment from the presence of the Lord and the glory of his power. Thus, while the unconverted have reason to tremble, as they learn their actual condition,—“*dead*,” yet mankind, and especially Christians, have reason to rejoice that Christ “died for all;” that the Father hath been reconciled to man; that “this man (Jesus) after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God, from henceforth expecting till *his enemies* be made his footstool.” Heb. x. 12, 13.

We will now turn to the following passage, found in the first chapter of Paul’s Epistle to the Colossians.

“Who (Christ) is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature: for by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether *they be* thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist: and He is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all *things* He might have the pre-eminence: for it pleased *the Father* that in Him should all fulness dwell; and, having made peace through the blood of His

cross, by Him to reconcile all things unto Himself; by Him, *I say*, whether *they be* things in earth, or things in heaven." verses 15—20.

The first thing to be noticed here is, that Christ is said to be the "first-born of every creature." We take this expression to mean, that He is to *the heavenly*, or those begotten of Him, what Adam was to the *earthly*, or those partaking of his nature. He is the "first-born of every creature, *because in him* [*ὅτι ἐν αὐτῷ*] *were all created.*" That is, in the purpose of the Father; in Him and through Him, "every creature" that "groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now," were created, whether they are *in the heavens or on the earth*, visible or invisible—the living or the departed—those having an existence now, or who are yet to exist. He hath been "appointed heir of *all.*" Heb. i. 2. He hath purchased all mankind with His most precious blood.

To Adam was granted the honour of being the *first-born* of the human family; therefore, all were created in him—he was the heir of all that would partake of his nature. Those begotten *of him*, would become heirs together *with him* of those yet to be born. The federal heads of both the natural and the spiritual creation are, in this respect, coincident. We may say of the first Adam, "for of him, and through him, are all mankind." But, as the second Adam has "a name which is above every name," it can be said of Him, "for of Him, and through Him, and *to Him*, are *all.*" Rom. xi. 36. As all mankind were created in Adam, the federal head of the earthy, before any were born unto him; so it is infallibly as certain, that *man*, created in the image of God, shall be begotten of Christ; *because all were created in him.*

Christ is *for all*, (περὶ πάντων,) and by Him all consist. (ver. 17.) That is, by tasting death for all, *He hath brought all together in Him*, (τὰ πάντα ἐν αὐτῷ συνέστηκες) although “we see not as yet all put under Him.” Heb. ii. 8. In accordance with what we here learn, *viz.* that all were created in Christ, we are also informed that, it is the good pleasure of God’s will, “that in the dispensation of the fulness of times He might gather together in one *all* things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth.” And that “God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth.” Phil. ii. 9, 10. Literally, that in the name of Jesus, every knee should bow, *of the heavenly*, (ἐπουρανίων,) and *of the earthly*, (ἐπιγείων) and *of the lower regions*, (καταχθονίων,) or of those under the earth. In a word, we are here taught, that “all flesh shall see the salvation of God.”

Again, in the eighteenth verse of the passage under consideration, we are informed that Christ is “the head of the body, the Church: who is *the beginning, the first-born* from the dead.” That is, he is “the first-born” of those who have, or shall ever partake of His nature; as Adam was the *first-born* of mankind. “That in all things He might have the pre-eminence,” or, as we would render it, “that He might be pre-eminently *in all*.” (ἐν ταῖς.) We have seen that “all were created in Him;” and from this fact, we think it easy to come to the precise meaning of the expression “in all.” It alludes to Christ himself, the federal head of the spiritual creation. As the whole family of man was created in Adam, so was the spiritual, in Christ. Both Adam and Christ, as federal

heads respectively of the natural and spiritual creation, stand *for all*, (*περὸ πάντων*), ver. 17, and therefore, nothing can be of them, that hath not been created in them; and consequently it follows, that they are *the all, in all*. The one of the natural, and the other of the spiritual creation. So considered Paul. See Col. iii. 11.

“For it pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell.” ver. 19. Out of Christ, there is no spiritual life; as out of the family of man, there is no human existence. The fulness of Adam was communicated to his posterity, of which he was the head: in like manner, the fulness of Christ is communicated to “the Church,” of which He is “the head.” The whole fulness of the human family is limited by its present extent; and on the other hand, the whole fulness of the Church, is bounded by the number which, to the present time, have been admitted into it. To subtract from the respective families of Adam and Christ one soul of those who have been, or shall be admitted into them, their fulness would be incomplete. Did Christ die *for all*? then were all created in him. It is as absurd to suppose that the fulness of Christ can be complete without taking in all for whom He died, and who “were created in Him,” as to suppose that the fulness of Adam can consist in a *part* of those who have or shall yet be descended from him. While the fulness of Christ is ever present, it is ever to be, until “*all*” (ver. 20.) that compose the fulness, shall have been collected together, or *reconciled unto himself through the blood of His cross*.

Although we think enough has been said, to show with distinctness the teaching of the sacred scriptures on the subject which we have been considering, yet it is of considerable importance that we pass in review portions

of the ninth and eleventh chapters of the Epistle to the Romans ; which, we think, will give us a distinct conception concerning *the promised seed*, as well as furnish additional testimony to the doctrine set forth in this treatise.

The *ninth* chapter will first claim our attention.—After Paul had made the plan of salvation the subject of a particular discussion in the preceding chapters of this epistle, lest his brethren according to the flesh should infer that his affections were alienated from them, he takes occasion to declare distinctly, the intensity of his regard for them :—“ I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, that I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh.”\* verses 1—3. He was not in the least inclined to regard with indifference the peculiar favours which they as a people had received at the hands of Jehovah. —“ Who are Israelites ; to whom *pertaineth* the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service *of God*, and the promises ; whose *are* the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ *came*, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.” verses 4, 5.

But as he was particularly enlightened in the plan of salvation, and perceived the almost helplessness of their situation, of whose blindness, folly, and superstition, he himself had been a perfect demonstration, and saw their utter aversion to that spiritual worship which alone is acceptable to God ; he undertakes to show wherein they

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\* The doctrine of the final restoration of all mankind, can alone consistently explain the *wish* of Paul in this verse.

erred, hoping, without doubt, that it might lead some of them to see the danger of their situation; and also, that their example might prove a salutary warning to Christians.

In the sixth verse we are informed, that he was far from thinking, that *the word of God* had *taken none effect*. He remembered, with the liveliest gratitude, that since the covenant made with Abraham, God had never been left without *a people*. He called to mind, all those who had died in the true faith, and such as were converted upon hearing of the name of Jesus:—truly, it had taken effect!! But, he adds, “they are not all Israel, which are of Israel.” Here, he distinguishes between the *spiritual* Israel, and Israel *according to the flesh*. In proof of this assertion, he educes the argument contained in the seven following verses, and which thus read:—

“Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, *are they* all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these *are* not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. For this *is* the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son. And not only *this*; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, *even* by our father Isaac; (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger: As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.”

The promise to Abraham, that he should be “the Father of many nations,” had altogether been misconstrued by the Jews; they supposed that it had respect

exclusively to their own nation. According to their view, Abraham was to be a father of *a nation* destined to universal empire; and this nation they vainly supposed to be confined to his descendants according to the flesh: instead of which, the promise to Abraham had reference to *a spiritual seed*—to those who should partake of the *new birth* unto righteousness, which all nations were ultimately to receive through him and his seed instrumentally. Of the fulfilment of this promise, the world has had partial demonstration, since the time of our blessed Saviour: and concerning the truth of the *apostle's assertion*—“Neither because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children”—they (the Jews) had sufficient proof, from those facts so abundantly scattered throughout their whole history, as well as from what had been written by the pen of inspiration which they professed to value so highly, and which was continually sounded in their ears: but they wilfully determined to close their eyes, and stop their ears, lest they should see and hear, and be converted.

As one and a very strong proof, that all of the seed of Abraham, according to the flesh, were not children *in the sense signified by Jehovah*, Paul quotes a passage from the book of Genesis: “But in Isaac shall thy seed be called.” Gen. xxi. 12: literally, *But in Isaac a seed shall be called to thee*. Let it always be remembered, the “*promise*” to Abraham, that he should be a father of many nations,” pertained to *a spiritual seed*; and therefore, in order to its fulfilment, there was absolute necessity that such a seed should continue unbroken to him, until the accomplishment of the predicted event. If the Gospel had been conveyed in any other manner to all nations, Abraham, then, could not have been instru-

mentally their spiritual father: "That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." ver. 8. The apostle here explains what he had just said. "Children of the flesh," means such as are in a state of nature, who are not living in the exercise of *faith*. Many of the children of Abraham, according to the flesh, *were rejected!* God signified to Abraham, that the promised seed was not according to the flesh, when he rejected *Ishmael*: and the reason why Isaac was in the honoured line, which should confer the great favour to all nations, was not merely because he was a child of Abraham, but on account of the *piety* which God foresaw would, and which did, so pre-eminently shine forth in his life.

Very little is known of *Ishmael*: but, from the fact of his rejection, we have reason to think that he was not a child of *faith*, and therefore *could not* be counted in the number of the promised seed. We know not at what he was "mocking," (Gen. xxi. 9,) which caused Sarah to insist upon his being sent away, but it is not unlikely that it was at the manifestations of piety in the lives of Abraham, Sarah, and their son Isaac.

"For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son." ver. 9. Although *Ishmael* was born unto Abraham, yet God foresaw what his real character would be: and to perform the "promise" which he made to Abraham, viz. that he should be a *father of many nations*, he wrought a direct miracle in the case of Isaac's birth; (Gen. xviii. 11; Heb. xi. 12:) and I have no doubt, if Isaac had not been a child of God *by faith*, another and another miracle would have been performed, until "*the promise*" had been verified.

God, who foresaw the piety of Isaac, also foresaw the respective characters of Esau and Jacob: and before they were born, declared that the elder should serve the younger. The choice of God here, as in the case of Isaac, was not irrespective of character, but was based upon the fact that Jacob would have respect to *the calling*, and accept *by faith* the blessing: and so we learn that Esau not only *despised*, but *sold* his birthright for a mess of pottage, (Gen. xxv. 34,) while Jacob *prevailed* with God! Thus God showed his *omniscience*, by the consistency of his choice: whereas, if the right of primogeniture had been “by works,” it would have fallen upon one unworthy and unsuitable, who was *without piety*, as well as a *murderer* at heart.

It appears that Isaac was as much in ignorance of the nature of the “promise,” as was Abraham: but God intended that they should be made distinctly to understand that the seed was not according to “the flesh,” or “of works.”

With the above agrees other portions of Paul’s writings. In the third chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians, he saith: “Know ye therefore, that they which are of faith, the same are the children of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, *saying*, In thee shall all nations be blessed. So then they which be of faith, are blessed with faithful Abraham.” verses 7—9. And again: “And if ye *be* Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” ver. 29.

Before leaving the chapter which we have been considering, (Rom. ix.) we will turn our attention more particularly to the eleventh verse: “For the children being

not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to *election* [ἐκλογὴν, *choice*,] might stand not of works, but of him that calleth." God purposed that the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Gen. iii. 15. This purpose depended upon, and was "according to, *the choice*" which He was pleased to exercise, viz: To rescue mankind from destruction. This "choice" was, if I may so speak, the foundation stone, upon which the whole superstructure of the plan of salvation was reared.

Ἐκλογη, which we would render *choice*, should ever be distinguished from ἐκλεκτός, (elected.) The *latter*, as was intimated on a previous occasion, alludes to Christians—to those who close in with the offers of salvation: while the *former* involves in its signification an independent act of the mind to do a thing, simply because it is the *will* or *pleasure* of the being by whom it is exercised. It does not suppose any obligation *necessary* or *compulsory*: for instance, fallen man had no claim whatever upon the mercy of God; he had broken the law, and merited death, but Mercy *chose* to interfere, and to rescue him from condemnation, by opening before him the way of life. So with *man*: he is not necessarily compelled to *choose* or accept the merciful provisions of the Gospel, although they are absolutely necessary for his present and eternal happiness. When any become Christians, it is because they choose to comply with the offers of salvation, as in the case of the Thessalonians. Paul says, when writing to them, "We give thanks to God always for you all, . . . remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and labour of love, and patience of hope, . . . knowing, brethren beloved, *your election of God*." 1 Thess. i. 4; or, more strictly rendered, it reads: know-

ing, brethren beloved, *under God your choice*, (ὑπὸ Θεοῦ τὴν ἐκλογὴν ὑμῶν.) The fruits of piety above mentioned, were so many proofs to Paul, that they had *chosen* to turn “from idols, to serve the true and living God,” ver. 9; and immediately afterwards, he imputes their choice in a great degree to his *own faithfulness*: “For,” he adds, “our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, . . . as *ye know* what manner of men *we were* among you *for your sake*. And *ye became followers of us* and of the Lord.” verses 5, 6. Let all ministers of the Gospel remember, that the choice of those among whom they labour, depends in a great degree upon their own faithfulness.

Again, what God hath chosen to perform will most undoubtedly be accomplished. Paul was “a chosen vessel,” (σκεῦος ἐκλογῆς,) to bear the name of the Lord “before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel.” Acts ix. 15. Therefore he says, “For though I preach the Gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for *necessity* is laid upon me.” 1 Cor. ix. 16. In like manner, God chose Saul and David to be kings of Israel, 1 Sam. ix. 15—17; xvi. 12, and Jonah to preach to the Ninevites.

We will now pass over to the eleventh chapter of Romans. The fifth verse thus reads: “Even so then at the present time also, there is a remnant according to *the election*, [ἐκλογὴν, *choice*,] of grace. The “seven thousand” (ver. 4,) which had not bowed the knee to Baal, were such as had respect *to the righteousness of FAITH*, and consequently, were *a remnant according to the choice* which God was pleased to extend towards the human family. And as it was in that dark period of the Jewish history, so has it been during every period of the history of the world; at least, since the days of Abraham, there

have always been “a remnant according to the choice of grace,” or, as it may very properly be rendered, “ON ACCOUNT of the choice of grace.” (κατ’ ἐκλογὴν χάριτος.) For if God had not chosen to institute a plan of salvation for the restoration of fallen man, there could never have been even *a remnant* of the human family which could have been saved.

In the sixth verse Paul takes occasion to show, that man is saved, either *by grace*, or *of works*. “And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise, grace is no more grace. But if it is of works, then it is no more of grace, otherwise, work is no more work.” He leaves his hearers to draw the inference. The matter was perfectly plain: if God saves us by His grace,” then we are not in the least saved by *our works*. He who is saved “according (or on account) of the choice of grace,” is precluded from supposing that there is any *merit* in the obedience which he renders. Independent of *grace*, it is utterly impossible for any man to be saved, however diligent he may be in performing good works.

“What then? Israel [the nation of Israel] hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the *election* [ἐκλογὴ, *choice*,] hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” ver. 7. The Jews, truly sought the favour of God; but while they thought themselves His favourites, they were under a gross delusion: they had not respect to “the righteousness which is by faith.” At the time when the apostle wrote this epistle, the Gentiles, whom the Jews thought had no claim to the favour of God, obtained it:—*but the choice hath obtained it*. God chose to save all mankind—both the Jew and the Gentile; and all who comply with the conditions of salvation, become “children of God”—a spiritual seed—a *remnant*, according to

the choice of grace ; while “the rest,” or, the remainder of the whole, of which “the remnant” is but a part, are wilfully blinded or hardened to their best interests by refusing to accept of the free offer of salvation through Jesus Christ. It is very evident, that the Jews had no greater claim to the *choice* of God than the Gentiles. Their being more highly favoured, was a natural consequence of *the piety of those*, from whom they were descended.

Although, to a casual observer, it might appear from the language of this verse, that *the remainder that were blinded*, were not included in *the choice* ; yet, we are not left in any doubt as to their being thus included, although they have not obtained the grace of God, so freely tendered to them : for, in the twenty-eighth verse, Paul says, “As concerning the Gospel, they are enemies for your sakes : but *as touching the election* [*κατὰ δὲ τὴν ἐκλογὴν, ὀν account of the choice,*] they are beloved for the fathers’ sake.” In this verse, the Jews are declared to be *enemies*, for the Gentiles’ sake : if it had not been so, it is likely that the Gospel would not have been preached unto them. The Jews would neither enter themselves, nor suffer others to go into the kingdom of heaven ; *yet, on account of the choice, THEY are beloved for the fathers’ sake.* That is, although “enemies,” God having chosen to save the world by the vicarious sacrifice of His Son ; they, as descended from the fathers of the human family, and especially from Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, “are beloved.” In this sense, all “enemies” are beloved, whether Jew or Gentile. God is “not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.”

The nation of Israel, instead of being “enemies,” might have remained *friends*, if they had observed to perform their duty to themselves, and to the Gentile

world. They became enemies, by resisting the will of God. Who will pretend to say, that these *enemies*, although *beloved on account of the choice*, could be saved without obtaining that righteousness which is by faith! And if “there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved,” but the name of Jesus Christ—if, “without the shedding of blood, there is no remission of sins;” how can they be saved, who will not go to Him, who alone can give them life?—Who count “the blood of the covenant . . . an unholy thing?” We must come to the conclusion, that all those enemies, who have died out of Christ, were consigned to endure an eternal banishment from His presence; although as touching THE CHOICE, they were, and are “beloved for the fathers’ sake.” Thus, we have a standing proof, that many, who *on account of the choice are beloved*, have died, and are still dying “enemies:” and therefore, if saved, they must be subdued to Christ, after they have passed from time into eternity.

The next verse (ver. 29,) throws additional light on the whole subject. “For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance.” This explains the reason why the Gentiles, who in times past, were in unbelief, had the offers of salvation extended to them; and also, why the Jews became enemies: they vainly supposed, that “the gifts and calling of God” were exclusively designed for themselves, instead of being graciously intended for the whole human family. In a perfectly natural manner we are brought down to the conclusion to which the apostle leads us, *viz.* “For God hath concluded ALL IN UNBELIEF, that He might have MERCY UPON ALL.” ver. 32. No wonder that he thus bursts forth with fervent ardour and admiring gratitude: “O! the depth of the riches, both

of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are His judgments, and His ways past finding out!"

The only remaining instance in the New Testament of the use of the word ἐκλογη, (choice,) is found in 2 Pet i. 10: "Wherefore, the rather brethren, give diligence to make your calling and *election* [ἐκλογὴν, choice,] sure." If being *called* and *chosen*, made it infallibly certain, that such could not become cast-aways; why the necessity of thus cautioning them? In this passage of scripture, the apostle holds forth the consequence of *fidelity*: viz. an abundant entrance into the *eternal* (αἰώνιον) kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: (ver. 11.) and *inferentially* warns Christians to avoid the bitter pains of *eternal death*.

The last passage which we will notice, as particularly treating on the extent of salvation, is found in 1 Tim. iv. 10: "We both labour, and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the SAVIOUR OF ALL MEN, specially of them that believe." If our Lord *saves all men*, can any finally be lost? A conclusive commentary upon this verse, will be found by reference to another verse similarly constructed. "As we have, therefore, opportunity, let us DO GOOD UNTO ALL MEN, especially unto them who are of the household of faith." Gal. vi. 10.

After having, as we think, shown from the word of God that there is no ground for supposing that the state of punishment beyond the grave is strictly *everlasting*, and having noticed the uniform testimony of those passages which particularly treat on the subject of salvation: before leaving the subject, we would here add, that it is "generally received by the Jews, that every Jew shall have a share in the world to come, but that such as have *lived ill must be purged, before they arrive at it.*"\* It is

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\* Burnet on the XXXIX Articles, p. 291.

highly probable that this belief was always prevalent among them; and as they imagined that the promises concerning the world to come, were exclusively intended for themselves, the inference is, that if they had not been under a delusion, they would have perceived that salvation was strictly universal, embracing the Gentile world as well as themselves: but, however that may have been, of this we are assured, that until the time of our Saviour, "the vail" was upon the heart of the whole Jewish nation. 2 Cor. iii. 13—16. They did not understand "the mystery," which had been kept secret from them. Rom. xvi. 25. They knew not *the hidden wisdom* which God had ordained before the ages or eternities, and which was first revealed by his spirit unto the disciples of our Lord and Saviour. 1 Cor. ii. 7—10. To understand the whole plan of salvation, we must look to the apostles, who were fully instructed in the glorious work of redemption, and not to those who were under *the vail*, and whose conceptions of the plans and purposes of the Almighty were necessarily so indistinct.

The *wish* of Paul, that he might be *accursed from Christ*, for his brethren and kinsmen according to the flesh, (Rom. ix. 3,) is a perfect anomaly, unless under the supposition that he believed that all were ultimately to be made alive in Christ. If indeed such was his belief, this otherwise difficult passage is easily explained. Like another Saviour, to his expanded soul, the joy set before him of saving his beloved nation, would have been sufficient to stimulate him to endure an eternal banishment from the presence of God!

Again, it has excited much surprise that the learned Origen, who flourished in the early part of the third century, should have believed that "after a number of years,

*the damned should be released from their torments, and made partakers of the joys of heaven:”\** but is it not rather surprising that the Church should ever have believed otherwise, when we are so distinctly informed, that as by one man’s disobedience *the many* were made sinners, even so, by the obedience of one shall *the many* be made righteous?

Lastly, the tenet of *purgatory*, even in the midst of Babylon, where it is used for purposes of gain, stands forth as a monument of antiquity, attesting the truth of the doctrine just considered, and which we believe was universally received by the primitive church.

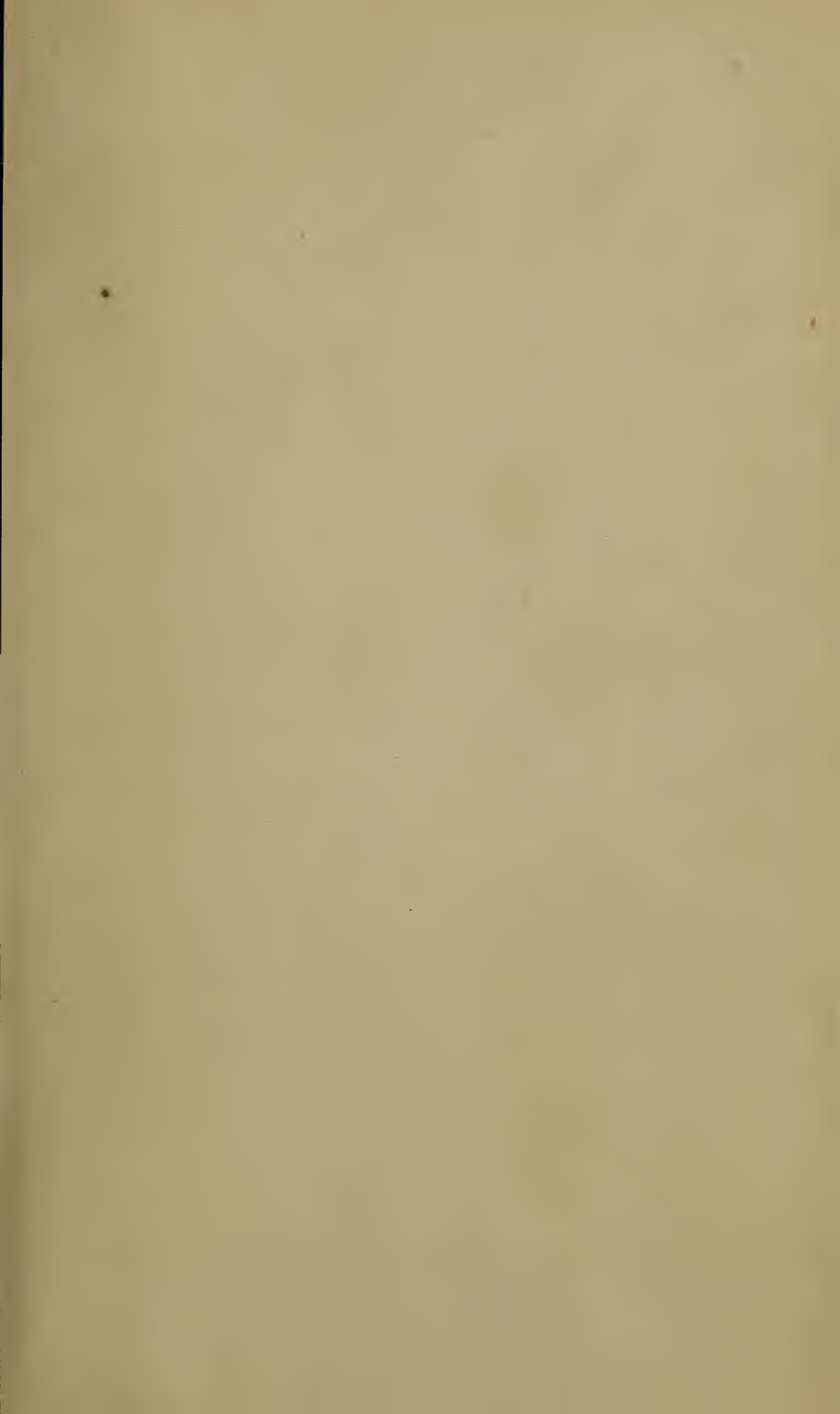
In conclusion, the author would beg leave to say, that in a number of instances, and especially in the foregoing part of this treatise, he has rendered the Greek words, αἰών and αἰώνιος, *eternity* and *eternal*, for the following reasons: *first*, because the readers of the English version of the scriptures have been accustomed to hear them similarly rendered: and *secondly*, by adopting this method, and following the usual and only proper mode of interpretation, he thought it would show more distinctly that the common acceptance of their meaning is erroneous: for instance, if a word in the singular number is rendered *for ever*, *eternal*, and *everlasting*, there can be no reason why the same word, or words when found in the plural number, should not be rendered with a plural signification: for example, if εἰς τὸν αἰῶνα may be properly translated *for ever*, or, which amounts to the same thing, *to eternity*, it is also proper to translate εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας, *unto the eternities*.

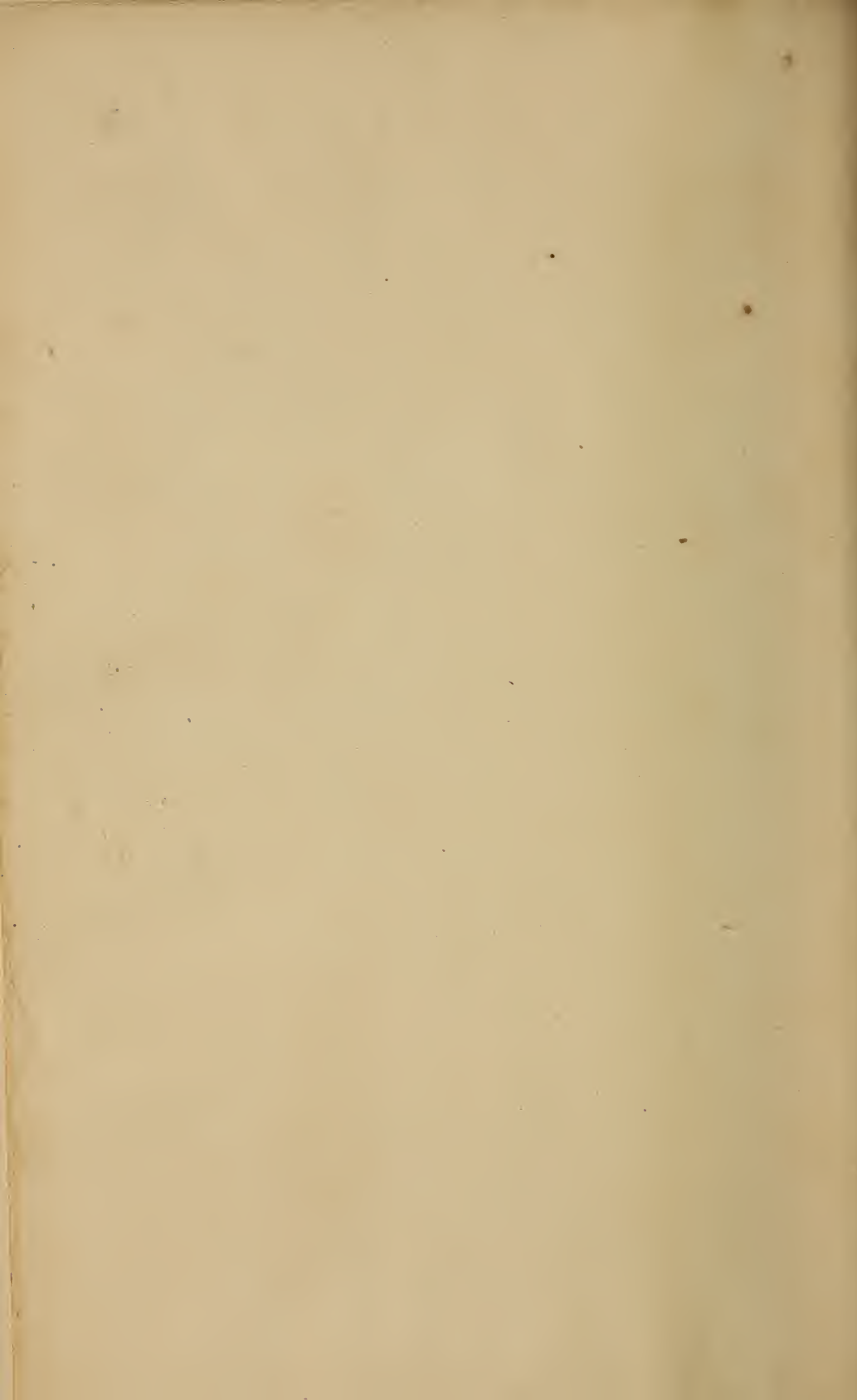
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\* Pearson on the Creed, p. 584.



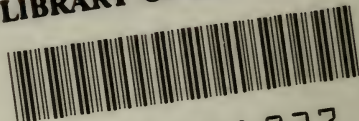






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